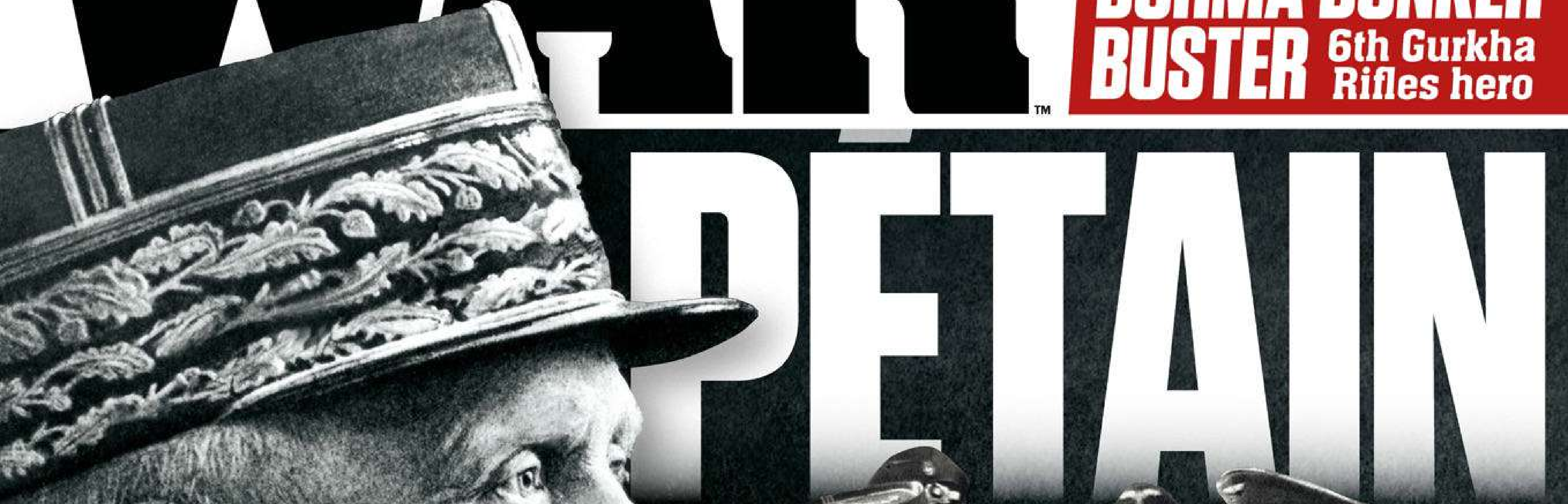
BRITAIN'S **BEST** MILITARY HISTORY MAGAZINE

# HISTORY of WAR™

## BURMA BUNKER BUSTER

6th Gurkha Rifles hero



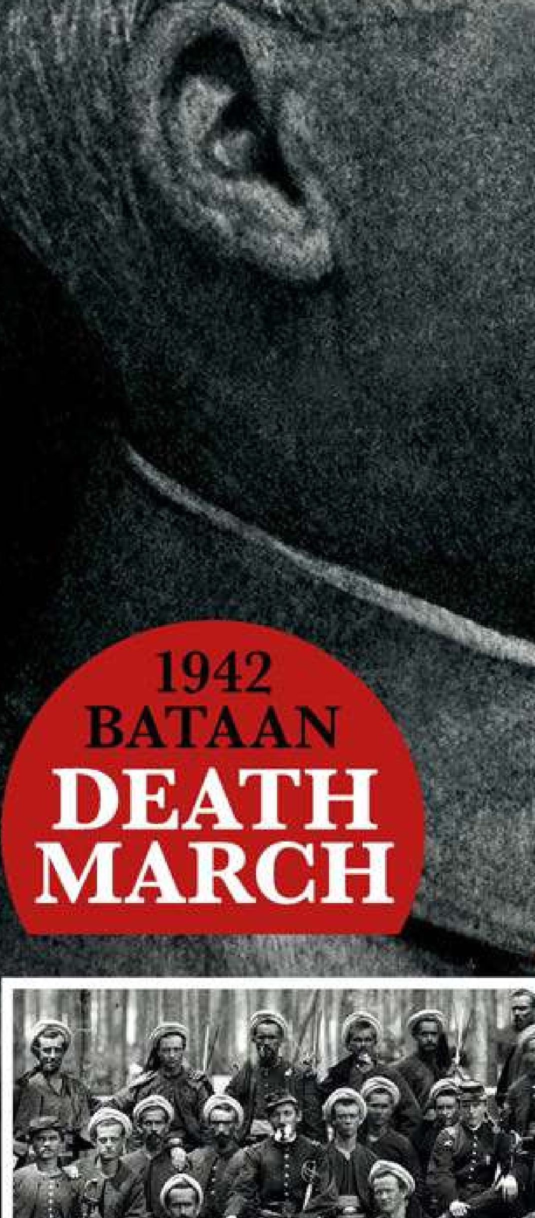
# PÉTAIN

How did France's hero of Verdun become the Vichy traitor?

FUTURE

ISSUE 105

1942 BATAAN **DEATH MARCH**



## CIVIL WAR ZOUAVES

Were these colourful light troops really the Union's elite?

## THE REAL TOP GUN

Inside the US Navy's elite fighter pilot training academy

## MONGOLS VS SAMURAI

Read how Kublai Khan's bloody invasion of Japan's Shogunate was crushed

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NAPOLEON
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D'INFANTERIE
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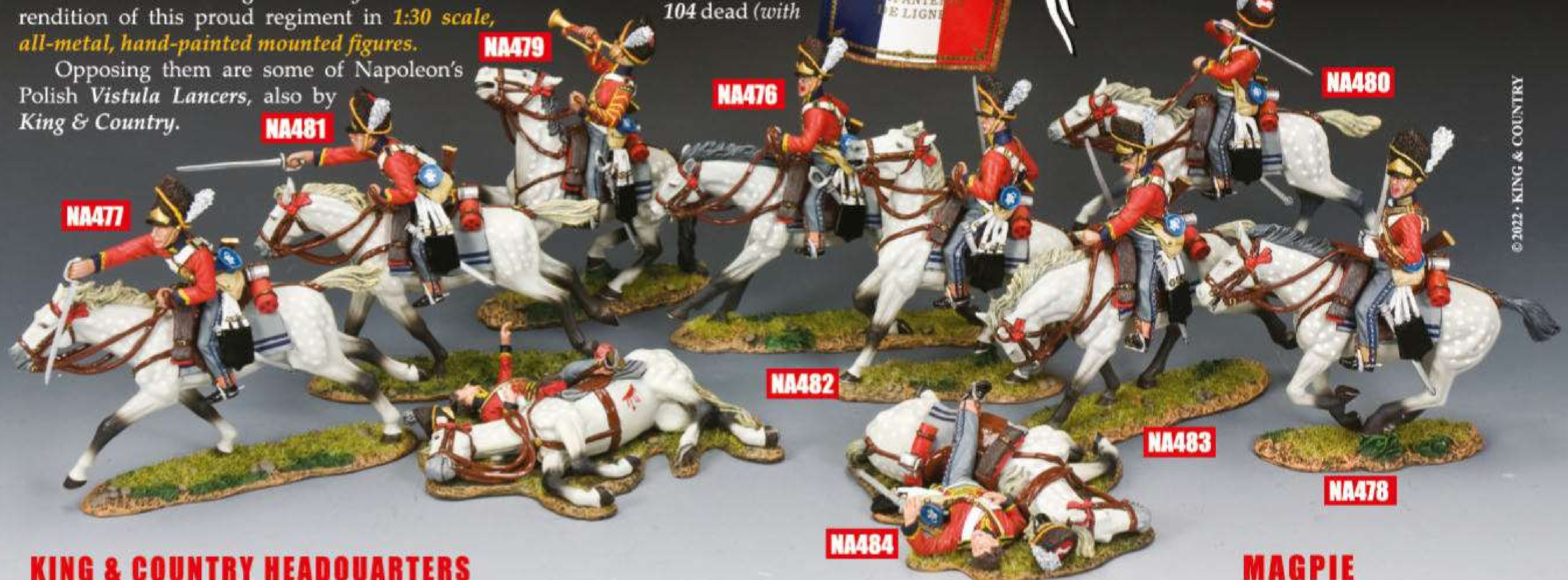

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## CONTRIBUTORS

**HARETH AL BUSTANI**

Hareth returns to the pages of *History of War*, this issue taking a look at the ill-fated Mongol invasions of Japan. These attacks launched by Kublai Khan saw a Mongol coalition take on outnumbered samurai forces in a bid to conquer the island of Kyushu (page 12).

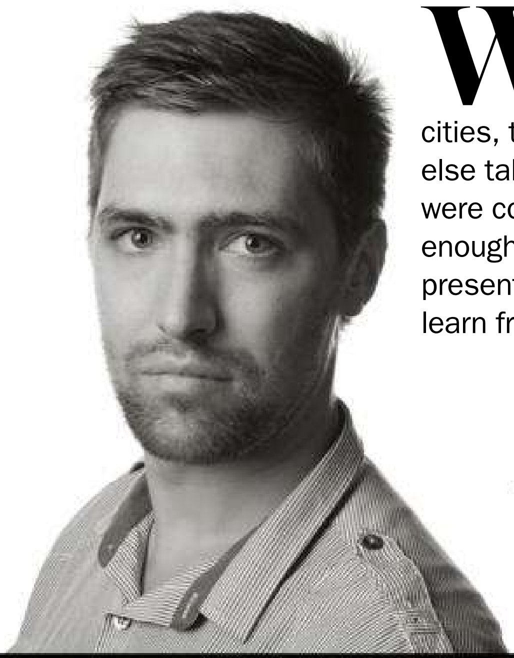
**MICHAEL HASKEW**

Regular *History of War* contributor Mike takes a look at the dark history of Philippe Pétain: France's First World War hero who became the head of the authoritarian Vichy regime in the aftermath of the Nazi victory in 1940 (page 24).

**MIGUEL MIRANDA**

Miguel is a writer specialising in South-East Asian military history, and has recently released his first novel. On page 38 he recounts the horrific Bataan Death March in the aftermath of the Fall of the Philippines in 1942.

# Welcome



While the *History of War* team has been putting the final touches to this issue, like the rest of the world we have been following the horrific invasion of Ukraine. Sirens wailing through deserted cities, tanks rolling down streets, and civilians sheltering underground or else taking up arms to defend their country – these are scenes we thought were consigned to Europe's history. This kind of total war is shocking enough to read about in history books, but it's now the brutal reality of the present day. As we witness this new conflict unfold, the lessons we can learn from the past are more important than ever.

Tim

**Tim Williamson**
Editor-in-Chief

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TURN TO PAGE 44

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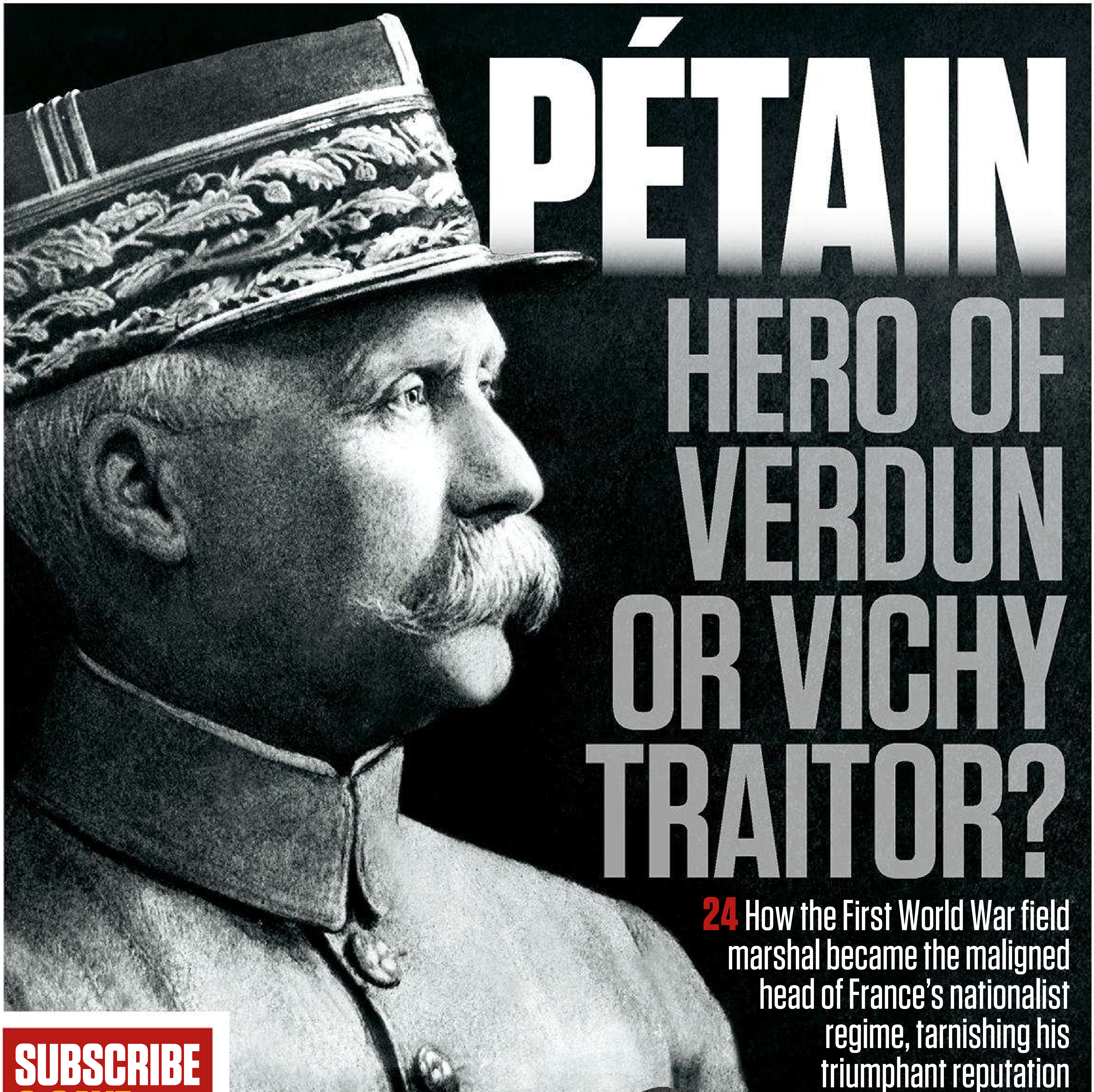

# PÉTAIN

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A decorative polearm belonging to one of Louis XIV's bodyguards

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# WAR in FOCUS

## ARMY GIRLS

*13 August 1941*

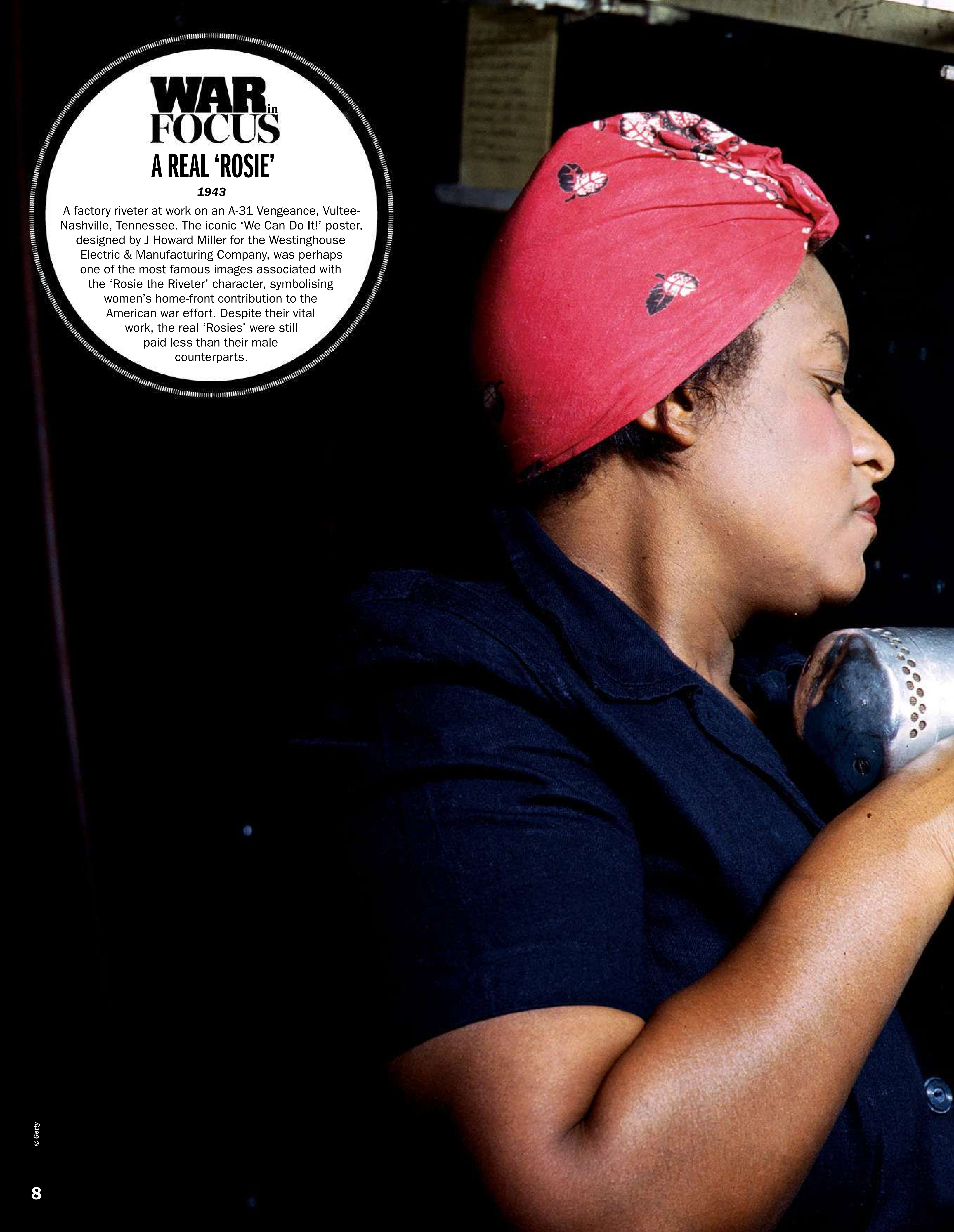
Members of the Women's Land Army (WLA), Britain's wartime home front organisation, help bring in crops on the Sussex Downs. Created to fill the roles vacated by male farm labourers and maintain Britain's food supplies, the WLA was made up of over 20,000 women, almost a third of whom came from towns and cities to work in the countryside. As well as bringing in crops, a large number of WLA members worked on dairy farms, and a separate Women's Timber Corps was set up to help supply the nation's factories.

© Getty

# A REAL 'ROSIE'

***1943***

A factory riveter at work on an A-31 Vengeance, Vultee-Nashville, Tennessee. The iconic 'We Can Do It!' poster, designed by J Howard Miller for the Westinghouse Electric & Manufacturing Company, was perhaps one of the most famous images associated with the 'Rosie the Riveter' character, symbolising women's home-front contribution to the American war effort. Despite their vital work, the real 'Rosies' were still paid less than their male counterparts.



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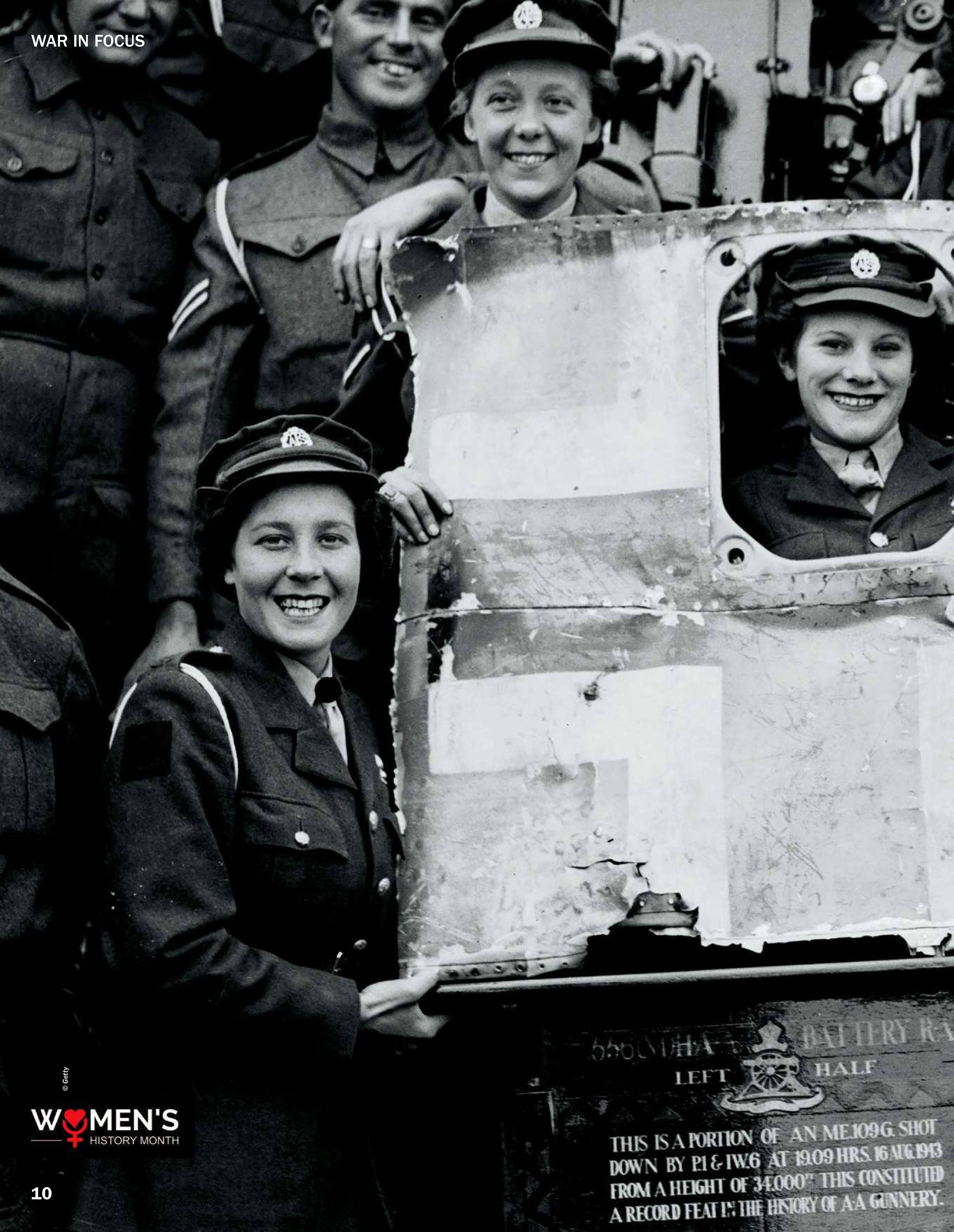
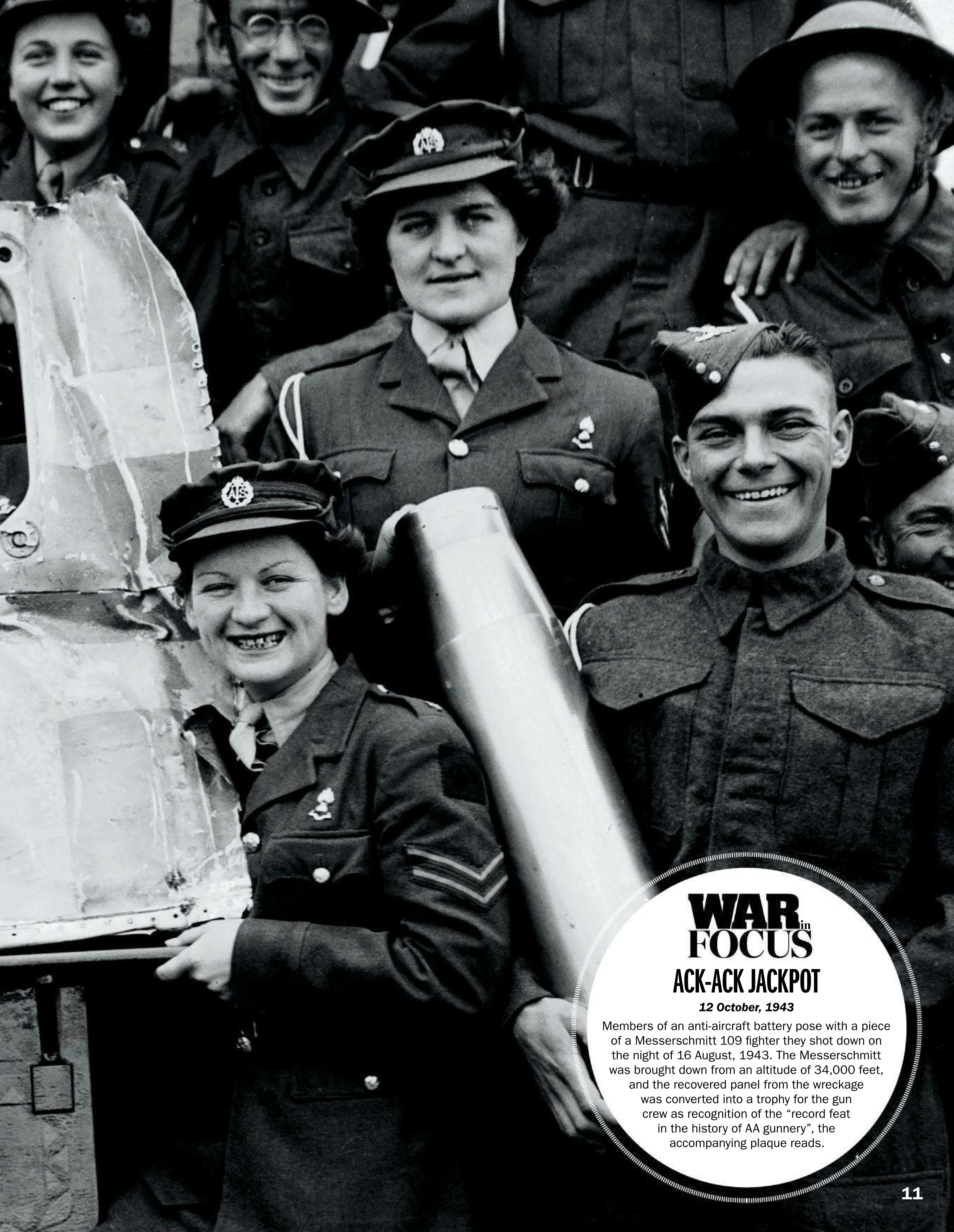

556(M)HA
BATTERY RA
LEFT
HALF
THIS IS A PORTION OF AN ME.109G. SHOT
DOWN BY P.1 & IW.6 AT 19.09 HRS. 16 AUG. 1943
FROM A HEIGHT OF 34.000" THIS CONSTITUTED
A RECORD FEAT IN THE HISTORY OF A-A GUNNERY.

© Getty

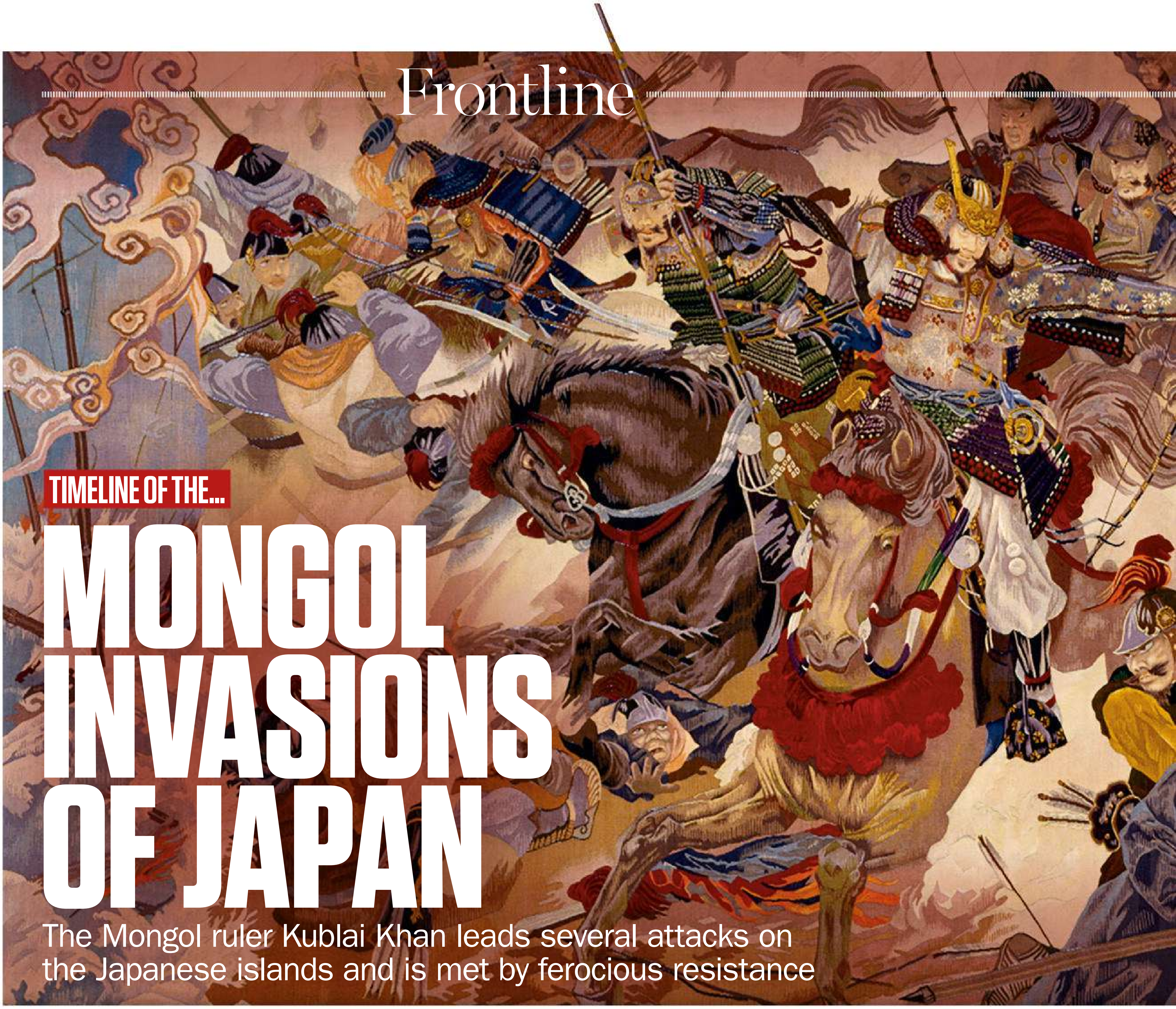
WOMEN'S
HISTORY MONTH



## ACK-ACK JACKPOT

***12 October, 1943***

Members of an anti-aircraft battery pose with a piece of a Messerschmitt 109 fighter they shot down on the night of 16 August, 1943. The Messerschmitt was brought down from an altitude of 34,000 feet, and the recovered panel from the wreckage was converted into a trophy for the gun crew as recognition of the "record feat in the history of AA gunnery", the accompanying plaque reads.

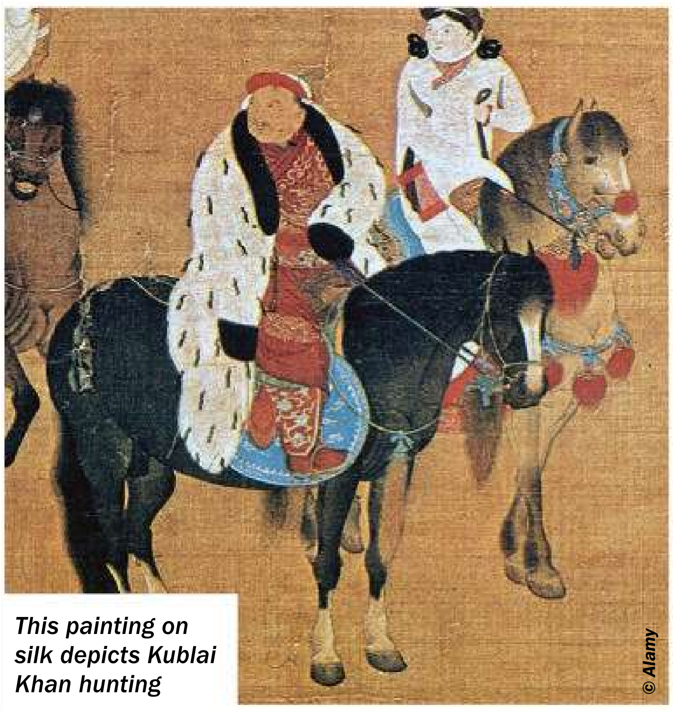


TIMELINE OF THE...

# MONGOL INVASIONS OF JAPAN

The Mongol ruler Kublai Khan leads several attacks on the Japanese islands and is met by ferocious resistance

1259-65



This painting on silk depicts Kublai Khan hunting

© Alamy

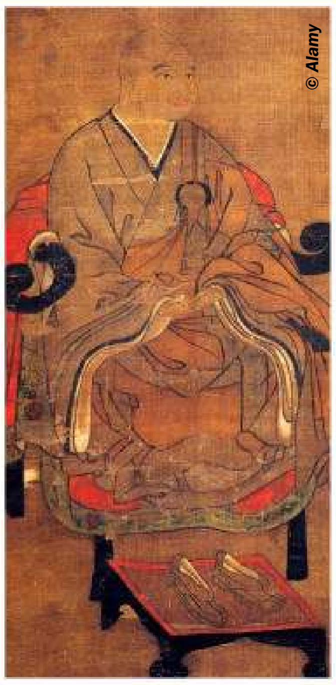
## RISE OF KUBLAI KHAN 01

After the Mongol Emperor Möngke Khan dies in battle, his brother Kublai eventually becomes the Great Khan after a brief civil war with his younger brother Arik Böke. Kublai continues his predecessor's conquest of China and makes the city of Yanjing – today Beijing – his capital. Kublai next conquers the Korean peninsula, which is ruled by the Koryo dynasty. This gives the Mongols ready access to a large number of Korean shipbuilders to mount their next military expansion.

1266-68

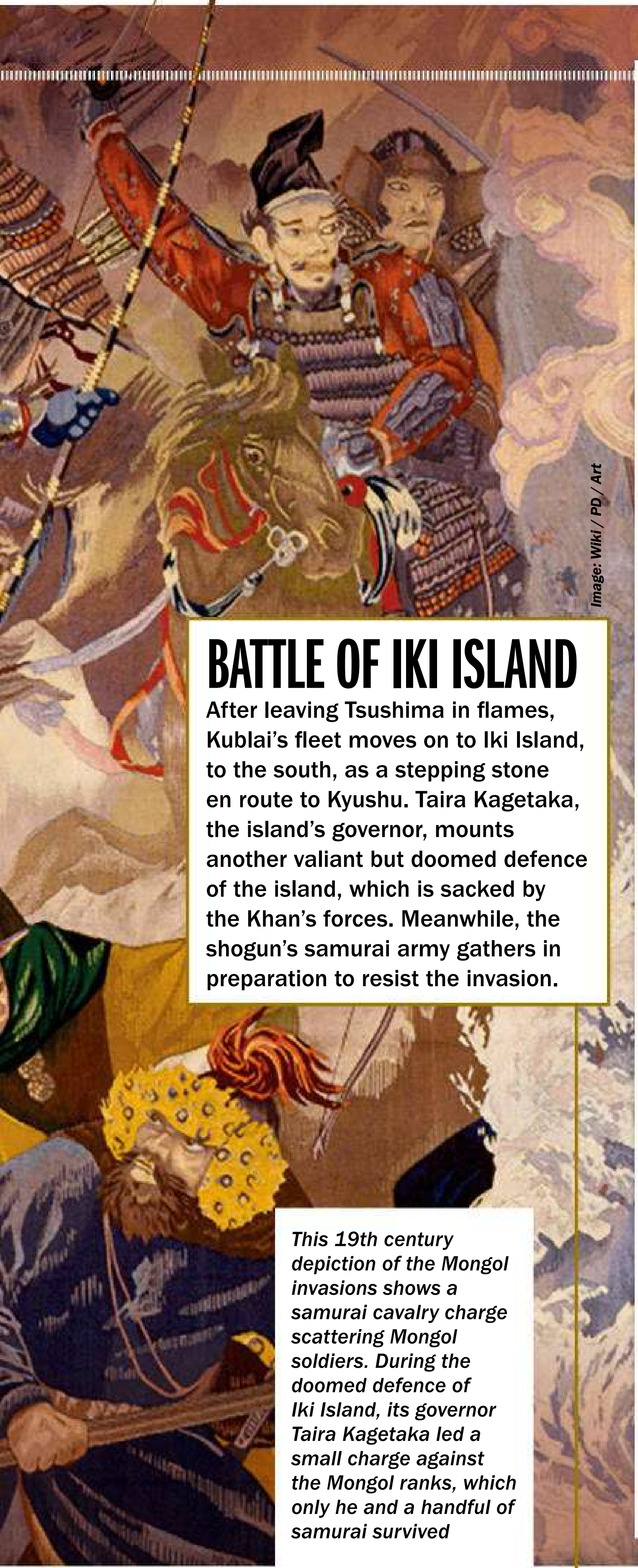
## OFFER TO THE EMPEROR

Seeking to bring the rich Japanese islands under his control, Kublai sends envoys with a letter to the shogun, who rules Japan in the emperor's stead. While recognising the reputation of Japan's warriors, Kublai offers the Japanese a chance to submit to his superior force and power, misjudging the samurai determination to fight.



Hojo Tokimune was officially the regent to the shogun, but was the de facto ruler of Japan

© Alamy

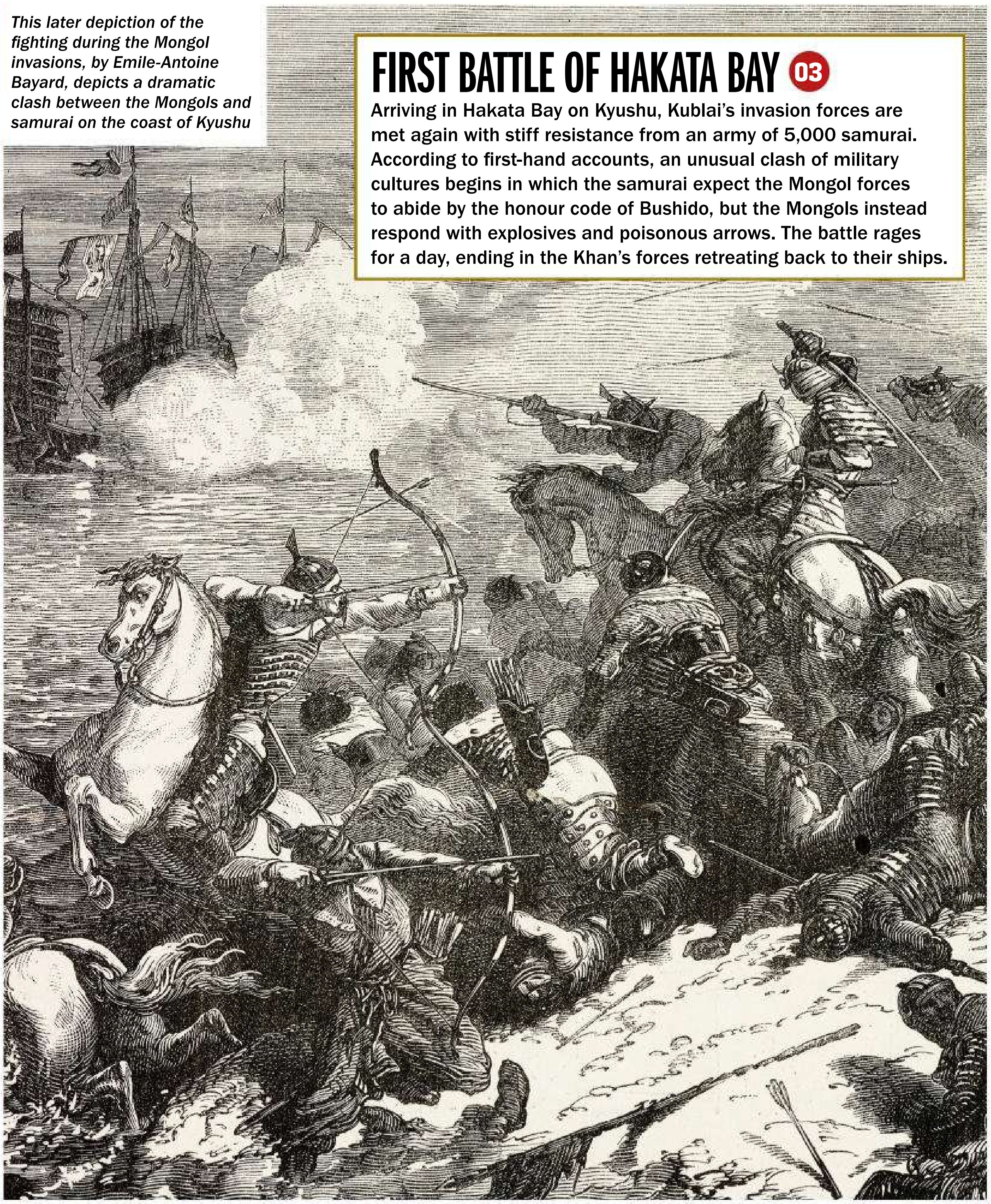


*This 19th century depiction of the Mongol invasions shows a samurai cavalry charge scattering Mongol soldiers. During the doomed defence of Iki Island, its governor Taira Kagetaka led a small charge against the Mongol ranks, which only he and a handful of samurai survived*

Image: Wiki / PD / Art

## BATTLE OF IKI ISLAND

After leaving Tsushima in flames, Kublai's fleet moves on to Iki Island, to the south, as a stepping stone en route to Kyushu. Taira Kagetaka, the island's governor, mounts another valiant but doomed defence of the island, which is sacked by the Khan's forces. Meanwhile, the shogun's samurai army gathers in preparation to resist the invasion.



*This later depiction of the fighting during the Mongol invasions, by Emile-Antoine Bayard, depicts a dramatic clash between the Mongols and samurai on the coast of Kyushu*

© Getty

## FIRST BATTLE OF HAKATA BAY 03

Arriving in Hakata Bay on Kyushu, Kublai's invasion forces are met again with stiff resistance from an army of 5,000 samurai. According to first-hand accounts, an unusual clash of military cultures begins in which the samurai expect the Mongol forces to abide by the honour code of Bushido, but the Mongols instead respond with explosives and poisonous arrows. The battle rages for a day, ending in the Khan's forces retreating back to their ships.

**4 November 1274**

**13-15 November 1274**

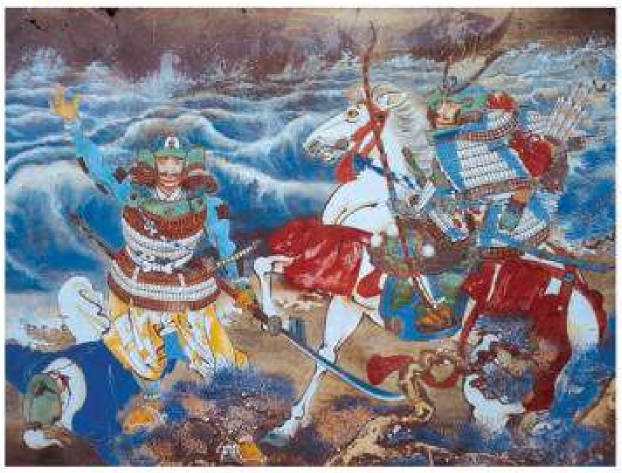
**18-19 November 1274**

**1274-80**

## INVASION OF TSUSHIMA 02

Around 30,000 Mongol, Korean and Chinese soldiers and sailors make the crossing to the island of Tsushima, which lies midway between the Korean peninsula and Kyushu, the southernmost of the main Japanese islands. Expecting little resistance, the landing force instead is met by a small samurai force led by Sukekuni So. Though the Japanese put up a sturdy defence, Kublai's forces are ultimately too strong and go on to lay waste to Tsushima's settlements.

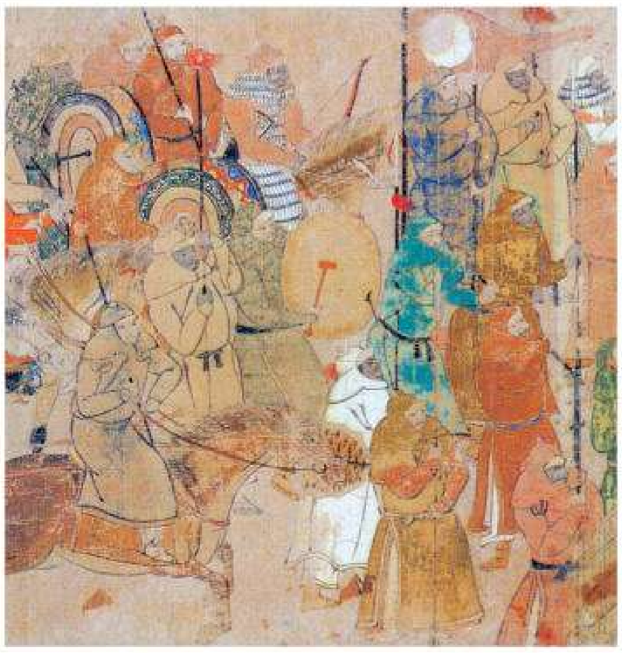
Image: Wiki / PD / Art



*Two samurai stand with a dead Mongol at their feet – one is thought to be a depiction of Tsushima's commander*

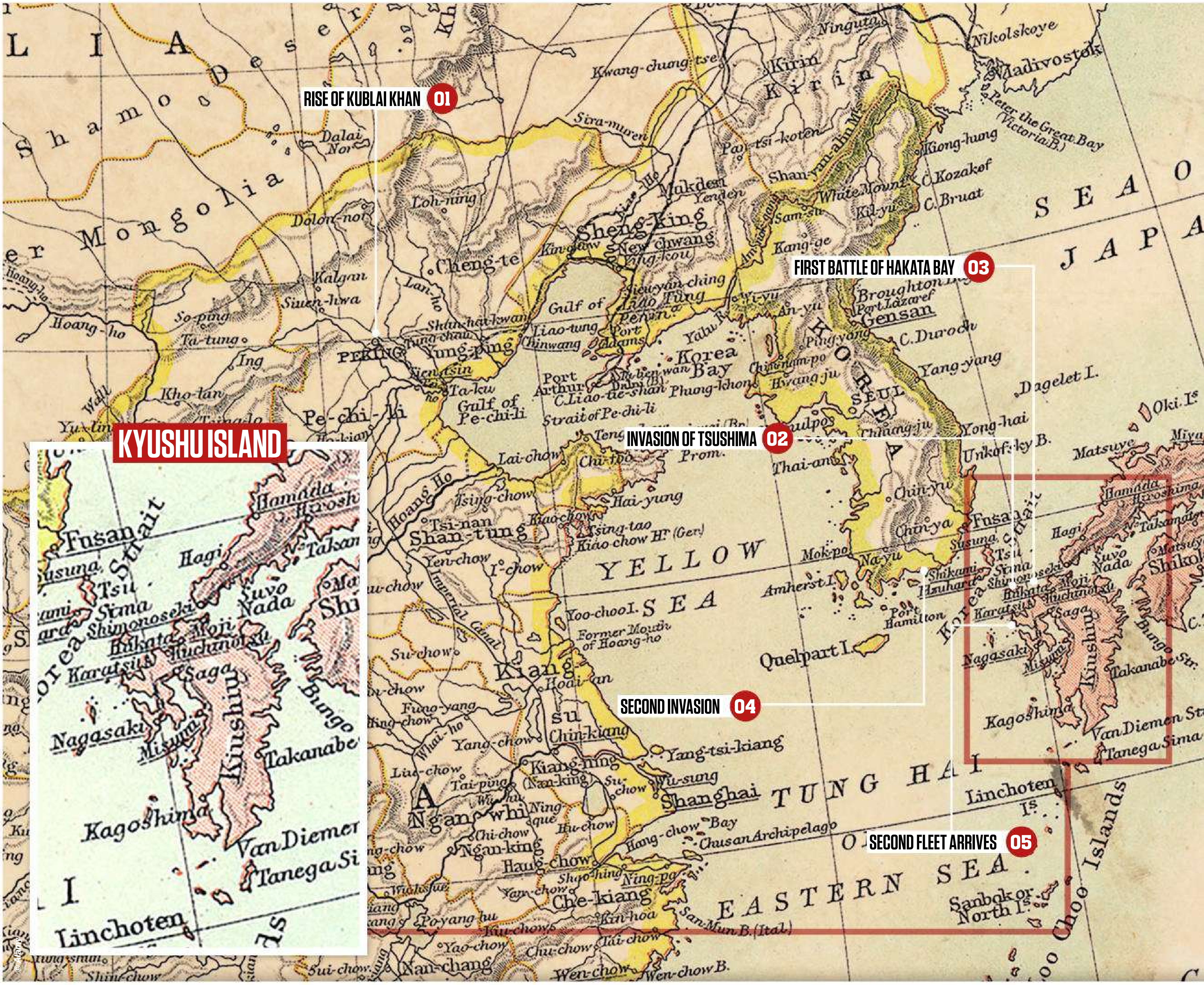
## THE KHAN CONSOLIDATES

Undeterred by the failure of his first landing on Kyushu, Kublai makes preparations for a second, much larger attack against the shogun's forces. But first he sends more envoys, who again attempt to convince the samurai to submit to Mongol rule. The envoys are instead decapitated, sending a clear message to Kublai.



*A contemporary depiction of Kublai Khan's forces preparing for the invasion of Japan, from the Moko Shurai Ekotoba scroll, commissioned by samurai Takezaki Suenaga*

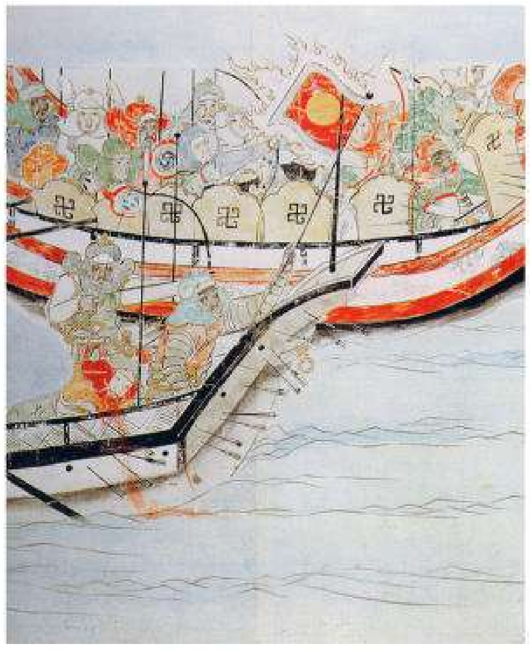
© Getty



**22 May 1281**

## SECOND INVASION 04

After completing his conquest of China, Kublai sends a second invasion force of reportedly 140,000 men across to Japan, though this figure is likely exaggerated. He separates the fleet into two groups: one sailing from the Koryo Kingdom and another from mainland China. The plan is that the two fleets will be able to rendezvous and attack the shogun's forces together. Launching from Korea, the Koryo fleet again moves through Tsushima and Iki islands, with the intention of the two fleets joining up to attack Kyushu.

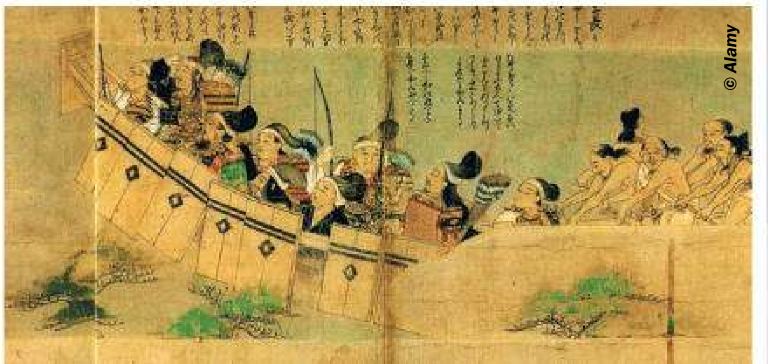


*A contemporary depiction of Mongol ships*

**23-30 June 1281**

## SECOND BATTLE OF HAKATA BAY

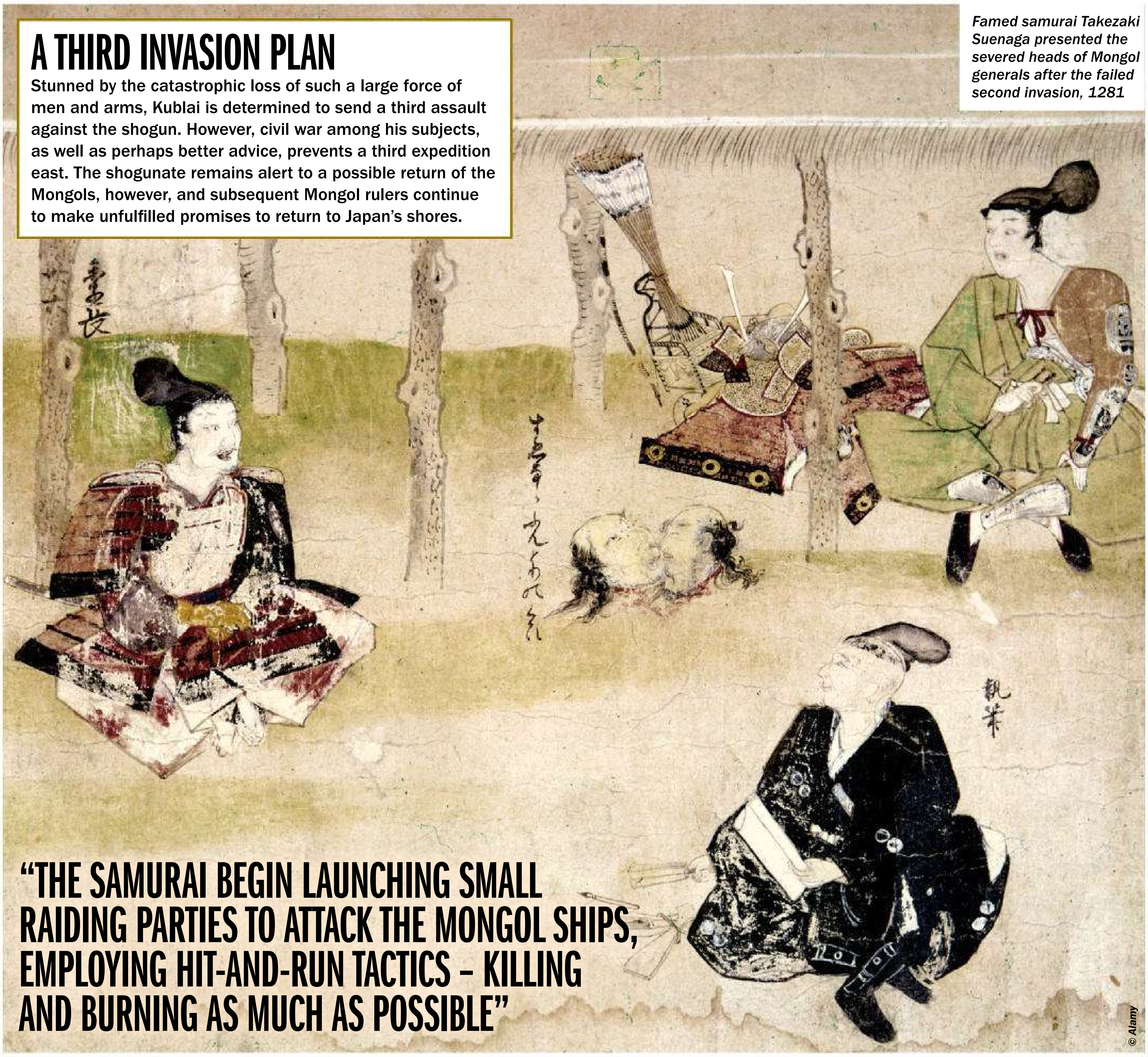
The shogun's samurai are again ready to meet Kublai's forces at Hakata Bay, and this time have constructed a large wall to block any Mongol landing. Ignoring Kublai's orders, the smaller Koryo fleet sails ahead without waiting for the Chinese section, and arrives first at Hakata. However, the invaders are repeatedly pushed back by spears and hails of arrows, and are unable to break out of the beach. The battle turns into a siege, with the Koryo fleet stuck at sea bombarding the samurai positions with missiles. After their initial setback the invasion fleet weighs anchor in the mouth of Hakata Bay and makes a landing on the tiny Shika Island. The samurai begin launching small raiding parties to attack the Mongol ships, employing hit-and-run tactics – killing and burning as much as possible before retreating back to the shore.



*Samurai forces are depicted behind their wall, which prevented the Mongols achieving a foothold on Kyushu*

© Alamy

Hakodate
Matsumai
Tsugaru
Aomori
Hirosaki
Chōkai
Sakata
Sado I.
C. Noto
Toyama
Nanao
Fushiki
Sakai
Wakasa B.
Kioto
Biwa
Osaka
Kobe
Hiogo
Sakai
Kino Chan.
Kochi
Tosa
JAPAN



## A THIRD INVASION PLAN

Stunned by the catastrophic loss of such a large force of men and arms, Kublai is determined to send a third assault against the shogun. However, civil war among his subjects, as well as perhaps better advice, prevents a third expedition east. The shogunate remains alert to a possible return of the Mongols, however, and subsequent Mongol rulers continue to make unfulfilled promises to return to Japan's shores.

*Famed samurai Takezaki Suenaga presented the severed heads of Mongol generals after the failed second invasion, 1281*

© Alamy

> "THE SAMURAI BEGIN LAUNCHING SMALL RAIDING PARTIES TO ATTACK THE MONGOL SHIPS, EMPLOYING HIT-AND-RUN TACTICS – KILLING AND BURNING AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE"

July 1281

13-14 August 1281

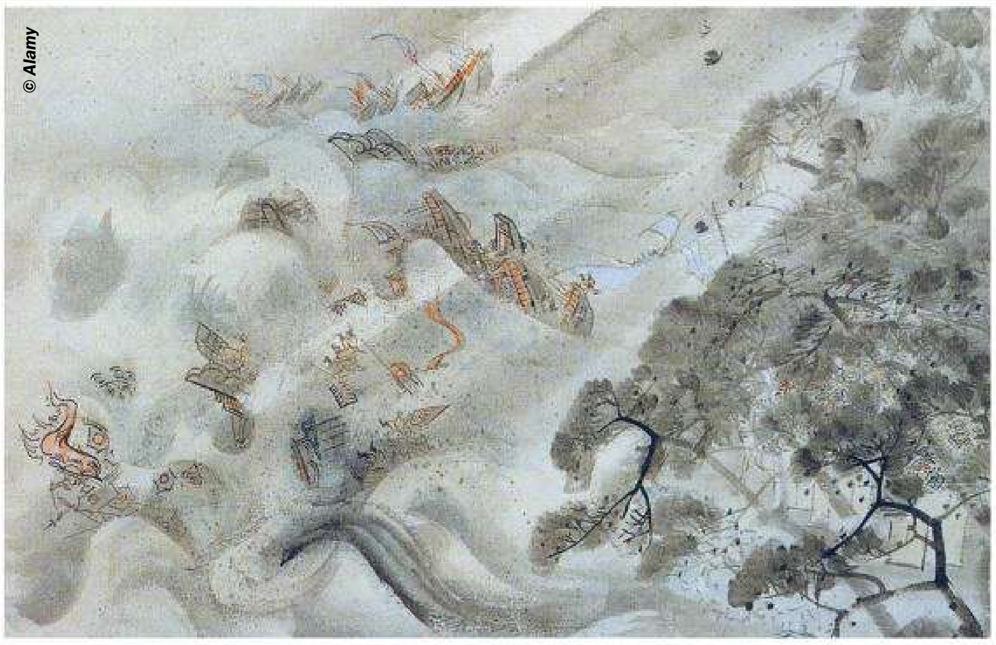
1283

## SECOND FLEET ARRIVES 05

While the Khan's smaller fleet is engaged at Hakata Bay, the much larger fleet eventually arrives and lands successfully at Imari Bay, to the south. The Mongols attempt to outflank the Japanese defences at Hakata, but the rough terrain of Kyushu proves impenetrable. The Khan's forces are unable to gain a foothold on land, but neither are the samurai able to drive off the large Mongol fleet, leading to a stalemate.

## THE 'DIVINE WIND'

According to legend a huge typhoon hits Kyushu, scattering the Khan's fleets at Imari Bay and Iki. Around 4,000 ships, each loaded with weapons, horses and men, are lost in the tempest. Many of the ships are lashed and chained together, compounding the devastating losses. The Japanese refer to this event as a kamikaze, or divine wind, that swept the Mongol invasion away from their islands.

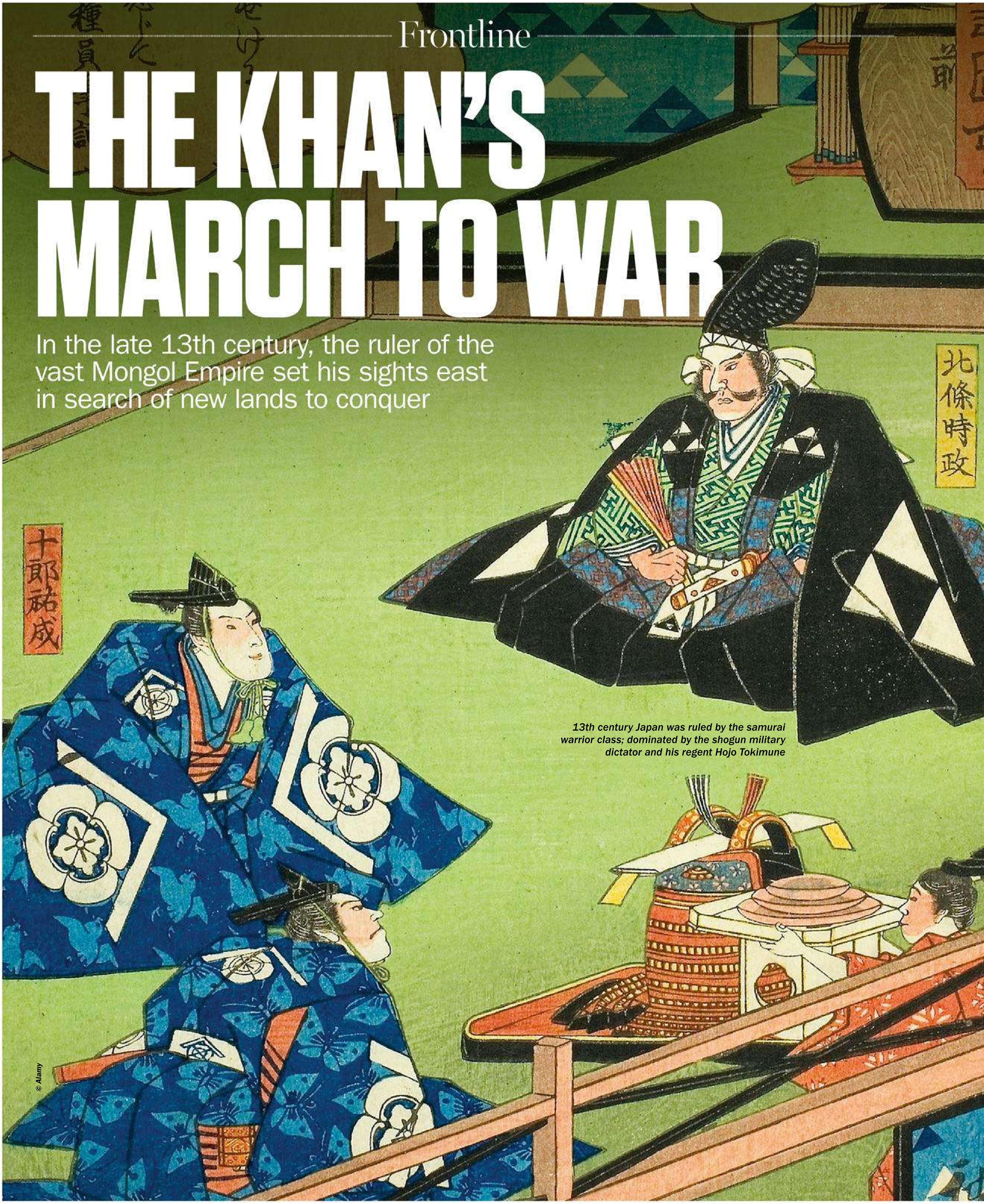


*This 19th century painting by Kikuchi Yosai depicts the Mongol fleet being wrecked by the kamikaze*

© Alamy

# THE KHAN'S MARCH TO WAR

In the late 13th century, the ruler of the vast Mongol Empire set his sights east in search of new lands to conquer



*13th century Japan was ruled by the samurai warrior class; dominated by the shogun military dictator and his regent Hojo Tokimune*

© Alamy

In 1259, after the Mongol Emperor Möngke died, his ferocious brother Kublai Khan became ruler of all the Mongols. Over the next decade, Kublai intensified the conquest of China, setting up a capital at Yanjing (modern Beijing). By the time the Korean kingdom of Koryo fell, Kublai's empire sprawled all the way west through Central Europe, to Syria. Despite being drained by years of war, Korea's capitulation gave the Mongols access to what historian Stephen Turnbull calls the peninsula's "considerable naval tradition". As Kublai continued to assault the Southern Song, the last Chinese power left standing, he set his sights further east, to the Japanese archipelago across the Tsushima Strait.

Japan was long known regionally to be an abundant source of precious metals. By the 13th century, its reputation for immeasurable stores of gold was so widespread that the Portuguese traveller Marco Polo regurgitated rumours that: "The king's palace is roofed with pure gold… and the floors are paved in gold two fingers thick." It was also home to some of the Far East's mightiest warriors: the noble samurai, the nation's ruling class to whom warfare was a way of life. They would make a fine Mongol vassal.

In 1266 Kublai was furious to learn that the Japanese had refused his envoys entry into the country, and he demanded the Korean king personally ensure they reached the Japanese court. At this time, Japan was ruled by a military government, named the bakufu. Although the bakufu ruled with the emperor's blessing, the imperial court itself had been reduced to a figurehead. Instead, authority ostensibly lay with the military dictator – known as the shogun – who was the leader of the samurai warrior class. Complicating matters further, at the time true power was in fact held by the shogun's regent, a man called Hojo Tokimune.

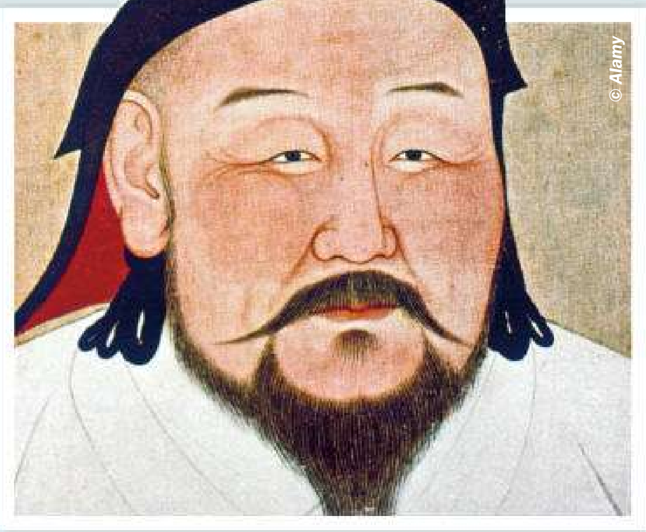
When Kublai's letter finally reached the Japanese court in 1268, it did not go down well. Despite appealing for "friendly relations", it was mired in threatening undertones, especially as Kublai, who described himself as the "Emperor of the Great Mongols", dismissed the Japanese emperor as "the king of a little country" – implying Japan was an inferior power. Kublai went on to gloat about his lofty conquest of Korea and asked why Japan hadn't come to pay tribute yet, arrogantly musing: "This must be because you are not fully informed." The letter concluded: "Let us enter into friendly relations with each other. Nobody would wish to resort to arms."

The Korean king warned Japan that Kublai harboured a "desire to be known throughout the world as one whose rule is all-embracing" – a view mirrored by the Japanese Zen priest Togen Eian, who remarked: "Because Japan's military skills supersede those of all other nations, our bows and arrows [are wielded with] peerless skill, and our armour makes even the gods tremble… the Mongols choose to conquer Japan." Elaborating, Togen added: "Once Japan's warriors are under their control they will be able to conquer China and India. The country of the Mongols would direct strategy, while Japan would fight in the field for victory. With the strength combined, no country could resist."

"KUBLAI HARBOURED A 'DESIRE TO BE KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AS ONE WHOSE RULE IS ALL-EMBRACING'"

To Kublai's rage, rather than acquiescing in fear, the Japanese just ignored him. They had never been anyone's vassal – not even China's – and they had no intention of changing this tradition now. The awkward task of facilitating Kublai's diplomatic efforts fell to the Koreans. In 1268, with no news back from Japan, the official Mongol chronicle, the *Yuan Shi*, records that the Koreans received the following orders: "In case, therefore, that we should plan a war against an intransigent country, it would be well for your country to send an army to help make war. It would be well for you to build one thousand fighting craft large enough to carry three or four thousand shi of rice." Not in a position to refuse, Korea mobilised up to 10,000 troops to build these ships. The next year, Japan refused yet another envoy of 70 diplomats; like the Mongols, they were already preparing for war, and while the military began reinforcing their coastal defences the emperor's court prayed for safety.

In 1271, the same year Kublai established the Yuan Dynasty in China, an edict was issued by the bakufu to the southernmost island of Kyushu: "We have received news that an invasion is imminent. All vassals who hold land in Kyushu must return to Kyushu immediately in order to fortify the land and pacify local outlaws."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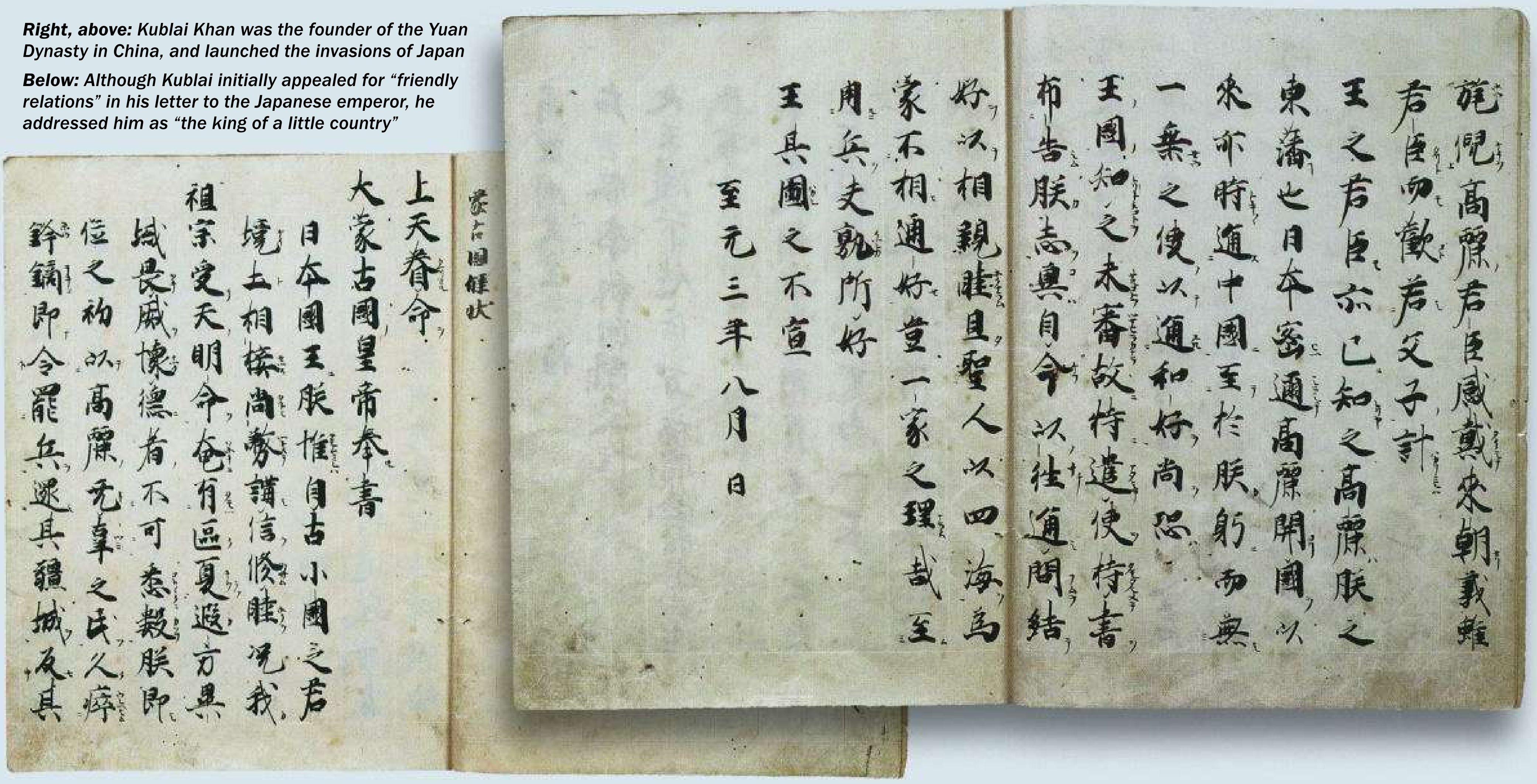
***Right, above:** Kublai Khan was the founder of the Yuan Dynasty in China, and launched the invasions of Japan*

***Below:** Although Kublai initially appealed for "friendly relations" in his letter to the Japanese emperor, he addressed him as "the king of a little country"*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域畏威懷德者不可悉數朕即
位之初以高麗無辜之民久瘁
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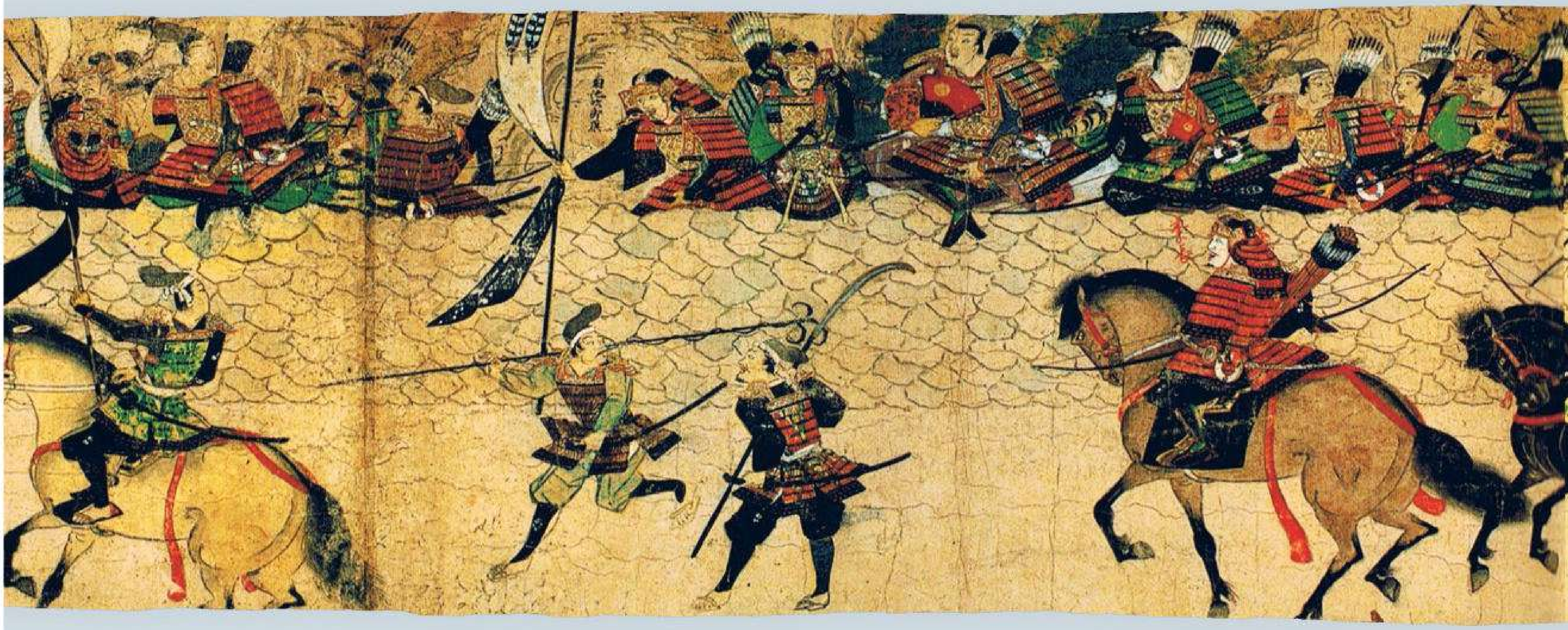
# MONGOLIAN MIGHT MEETS SAMURAI STEEL



Waves of the Khan's forces swept across the shogunate's lands. They were met by Japan's outmatched yet determined and skilful warrior class

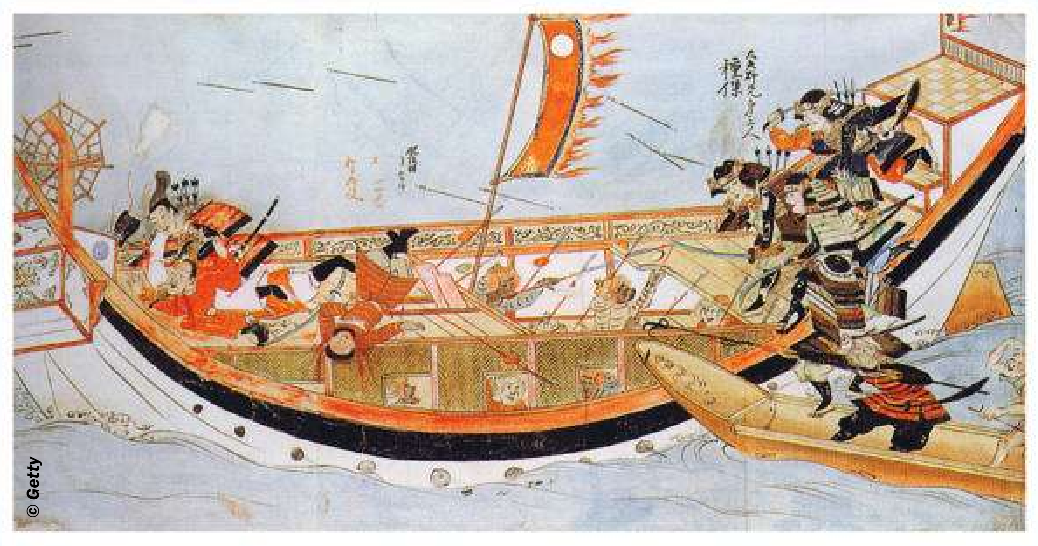
In 1274, with China's Southern Song on the verge of defeat and their Korean fleet finally ready, the Mongols set sail with 23,000 Mongol, Korean and Chinese soldiers, plus 7,000 sailors. Landing at the island of Tsushima, the Mongols were bewildered to find the local samurai lord mounting a suicidal defence backed by just 80 cavalrymen. The highly skilled samurai archers were able to pick off scores of enemy soldiers before being surrounded and defeated. Determined to break this unfathomably bold warrior spirit, the Mongols resorted to terror tactics, burning down all the island's buildings and slaughtering its residents, before pressing on via Iki Island to Kyushu, the southernmost of the main Japanese islands.

Contemporary historian Nichiren Shonin Chu-gassan describes how, as the Mongol armada approached Hakata Bay on Kyushu, the Japanese were appalled to see the invaders had captured scores of Japanese women, punched holes in their hands, threaded rope through them and laced them across the bows of their ships. The next morning, the two armies clashed. For the Japanese, it was a rude awakening.

Samurai combat of the era was a highly formalised and ritualistic affair, with warriors hurtling onto the battlefield screaming their names and ranks, searching for an equal to fight in single combat or an archery duel. "You get these periods in Japanese history where there are no real wars to fight, and the young samurai grow up with an idealised idea of combat," explains historian Jonathan Clements, author of *A Brief History of the Samurai*. "There were certainly some elements of the samurai battles that had become quite ritualised. There was a certain chivalric code that had come into being whereby you rode out into the battlefield, announced your lineage and asked if there were a champion among the enemy worthy of fighting. Some of the samurai engagements did indeed start like that, and only degenerated into battle later on." The Mongols, on the other hand, were not interested in that kind of ritual. "For the samurai it was part of the rules, but nobody told the Mongols what the rules were and they would never have listened to them anyway," says Clements.

> "FOR THE SAMURAI, SINGLE COMBAT WAS PART OF THE RULES, BUT NOBODY TOLD THE MONGOLS WHAT THE RULES WERE AND THEY WOULD NEVER HAVE LISTENED ANYWAY"

When the Japanese shot a whistling arrow over the Mongol ships to invite the attention of the kami spirits, the Mongols simply laughed. "Humming-bulb arrows served little purpose if you weren't trying to scare enemy horses, so it was little different from drums or bagpipes to the Mongols," explains Clements. Coordinated by pummels of war drums, the Mongols returned by shooting poisoned arrows and exploding bombs "because they meant business, and that was a shock to some of the samurai". The history book *Hachiman Gudokun* describes how "the Japanese horses were so frightened by these stupendous sounds that they could not be controlled – because they could not handle their horses, none could face the enemy".



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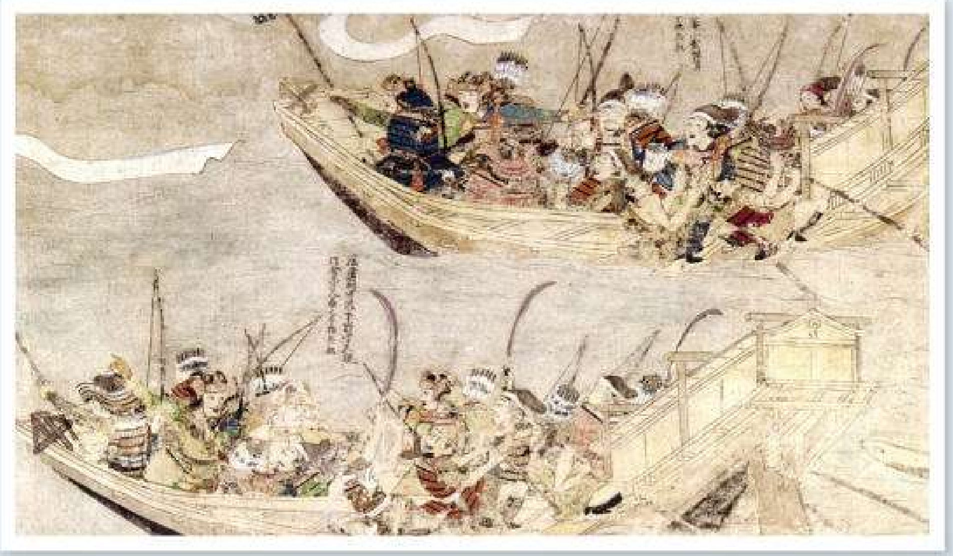

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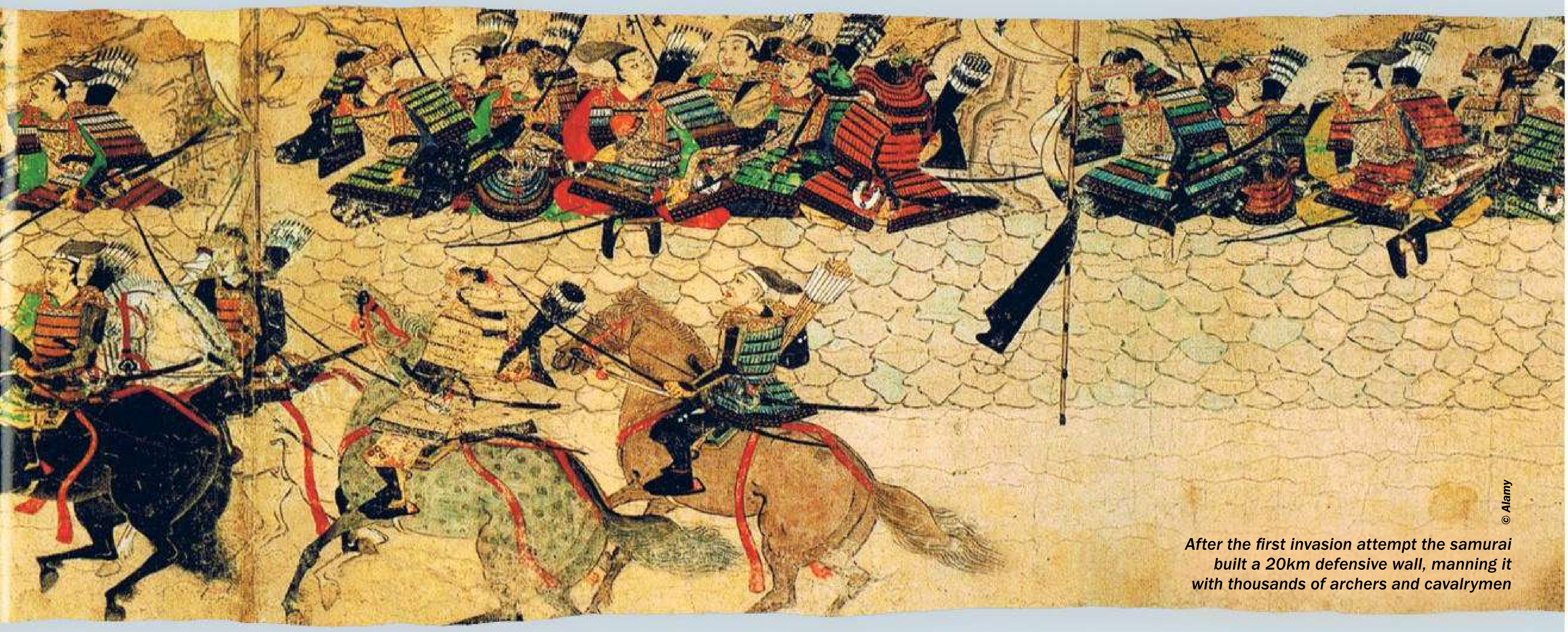
**Top-left:** *During the second invasion, Japanese warriors launched guerilla attacks on Mongol ships, scaling them with grappling hooks, massacring the crews and setting the vessels ablaze*

**Top, right:** *Although the Japanese defended bravely it was a stroke of luck that sank the Mongol armada: a mighty typhoon dubbed kamikaze, or divine wind*



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*After the first invasion attempt the samurai built a 20km defensive wall, manning it with thousands of archers and cavalrymen*

After this exchange the Mongols stormed onto the shore, pouring out in tightly organised formations. The 5,000 samurai defenders, who had expected a slower start to the battle, were in disarray. Drawn from across Japan, rather than fighting for the group, individuals were so desperate to be the first from their provinces to enter the fray they simply hurtled in, disobeying orders and ignoring any larger notion of strategy.

Despite being pushed several miles inland, the samurai fought bravely and skilfully, and hacked down 13,500 enemies over the course of the day. When a senior Mongol officer, said to tower over two metres high, was shot in the face near the earthwork fortress of Mizuki, the attackers retreated back to their ships. After just a day of fighting a storm began to close in and the Koreans convinced the Mongols to retreat lest they be marooned.

## The second invasion

Frustrated but undeterred by the setback, Kublai Khan sent another envoy to Japan to once again urge their ‘king’ to pay tribute to him in Beijing. Instead, the Japanese replied with a message of their own: decapitating the messengers. This was an insult quite unlike any the Mongols had suffered before. Aware there would be consequences, Japan declared a state of emergency and began preparations for a second, even greater, Mongol invasion. The shogun commissioned a fleet of warships and built a two-metre-high stone wall, running 20km along Hakata Bay and 50 metres from the shore.

By 1281, having finally completed his conquest of Southern China, Kublai directed the full force of his army towards punishing Japan. This time, he sent out one fleet of 40,000 soldiers and another of 100,000 from Southern China. Though these figures may be exaggerated, for the time it was certainly a colossal invasion force. The Korean navy arrived first, only to be held back by the Japanese archers shooting arrows from behind their new wall. They then made room for their cavalry to mount effective counter-attacks.

Having met a higher level of organisation than they were expecting, the Mongols anchored at a pair of nearby islands. There, they encountered another surprising first: the Japanese launched a steady stream of guerrilla raids. These were typically courageous affairs, with warriors leaping into small boats or swimming out to the Mongol ships, scaling them with grappling irons and killing as many enemies as they could. *Hachiman Gudokun* immortalises the exploits of Kusano Jiro, who led a night attack, dodging stones hurled from modified Chinese siege crossbows. Using the mast of their boat to board the invaders’ ship, he and his men killed 21 enemies before setting the vessel ablaze.

The Japanese defended so aptly, and their raids were so incessant, that the Korean navy retreated back to Iki Island, where they linked up with 3,500 Chinese ships. The vessels chained themselves together to form what Clements describes as a “floating fortress”, with scores of Mongol ships lashed together and “circled by a wooden walkway as a combined embarkation for landing craft and defensive perimeter against the inevitable Japanese marine assault”.

As the Japanese braced for an almighty invasion an enormous typhoon swelled from nowhere, gobbling up the Mongol ships and smashing them into the cliffs, rocks and even against one another. The chains and planks linking them only magnified the damage, as ships dragged each other down into the depths, drowning tens of thousands of men. Up to 90 percent of the Mongol invasion force perished in the vicious storm – dubbed the kamikaze, or divine wind, by the Japanese.

# THE DIVINE WIND

## With his invasion forces scattered by storms, the Khan planned yet another attempt to conquer Japan

After the disaster on his force wrought by the kamikaze, the Khan ordered a third invasion almost immediately in a last-ditch attempt to crush the Japanese. "Kublai believed his advisers when they said that the Japanese were tough fighters but sure to be defeated, like little venomous snakes," says historian Jonathan Clements. "There were plenty of people to blame for the disaster, so the possibility remained in his mind that the Japanese had been lucky."

However, the first two failed attacks had so badly drained material and manpower from Korea and the Yangtze delta that the Mongols needed time to rebuild their forces again. Clements says: "In 1283 an attack force of over 600 ships was assembled under a Mongol leader, but that was called off because Kublai had been plunged into a civil war in Inner Asia with one of his relatives and he needed the resources elsewhere. In 1284 he sent an emissary to Japan, but the man was murdered en route, so that held up communications again."

Although the samurai remained on high alert for another attack until Kublai's death in 1294, the Mongols never returned. "To officially cancel the plan, of course, would have been an admission of defeat, so an office tasked with planning the invasion of Japan remained in existence, at least on paper, right the way until the end of the dynasty 90 years later," Clements explains,

He also argues that aside from being incredibly unlucky, the Mongols were severely disadvantaged in marine strategy: "They were buying in water-borne talent from the Chinese and Koreans, but they were unwilling servants. Mongol expansion did really reach a sort of high-water mark at the coastline of their conquests, and their attempts on Japan and Java were both plagued by misfortunes. Without the kamikaze storms, they might have gained a foothold in Kyushu, but it's difficult for me to imagine them turning that into a rolling advance northward unless they somehow persuaded a bunch of locals to switch sides."

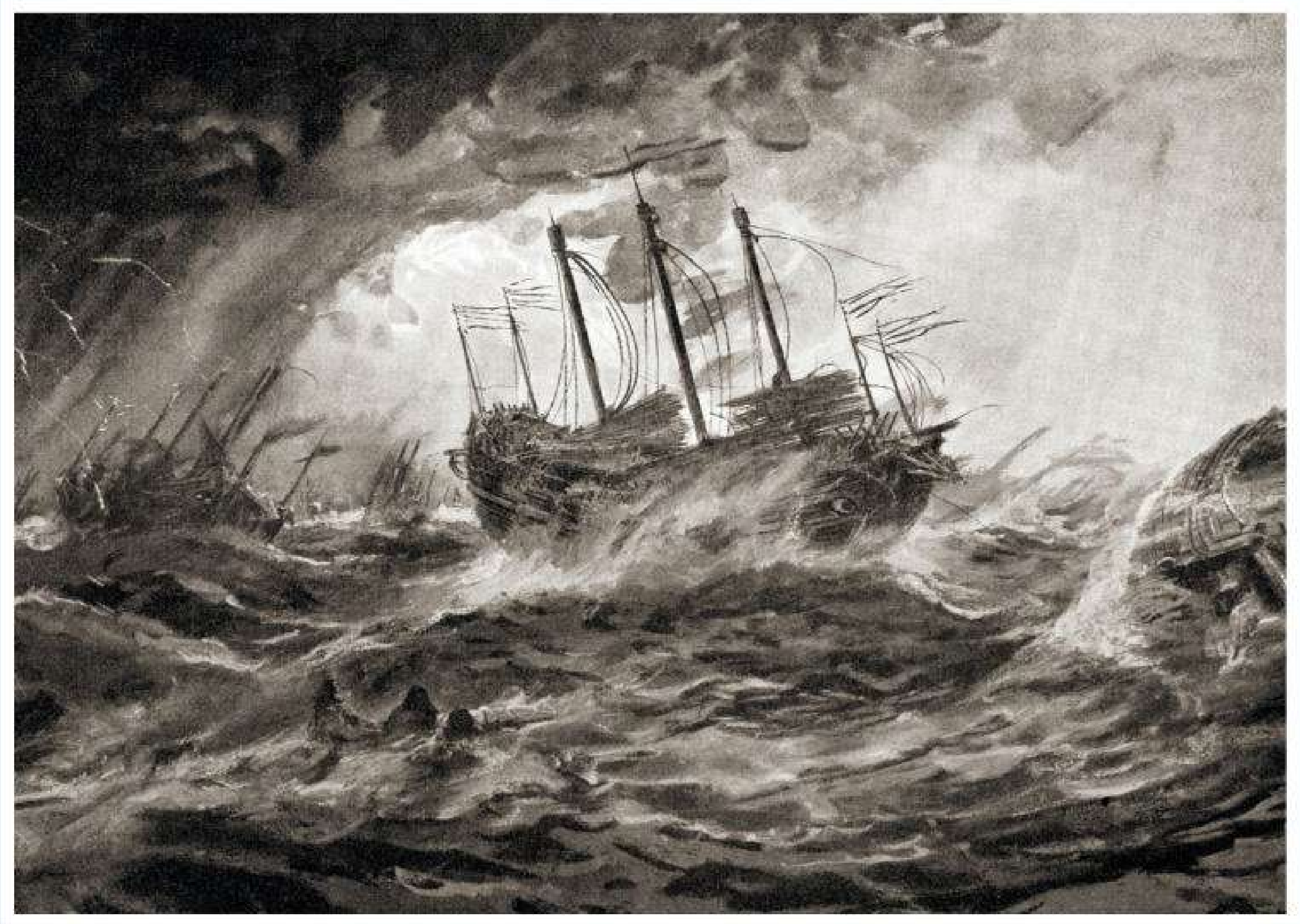
The typhoon that saved Japan, making it one of the only countries to successfully stand up to the Mongols, was seen as an act of divine intervention. Historian Stephen Turnbull explains that the kamikaze myth that developed in the ensuing centuries led to "an anachronistic belief that the samurai were displaying an unselfish and nationalistic consciousness in the face of a foreign enemy". He continues: "This myth was to reach a climax during the final months of World War II when the Japanese, faced with an invasion of their homeland by a foreign enemy for the first time since the Mongol invasions, turned in desperation to suicide attacks and adopted the name of kamikaze for the pilots who were to carry them out."

> "KUBLAI BELIEVED HIS ADVISERS WHEN THEY SAID THAT THE JAPANESE WERE TOUGH FIGHTERS BUT SURE TO BE DEFEATED, LIKE LITTLE VENOMOUS SNAKES"

For a while, the Mongols "stripped" the ritual out of Japanese warfare, for reasons of necessity, adds Clements. "You get battle-hardened veterans who will do whatever it takes, and they establish peace, and then their grandchildren grow up with nothing but plays and songs telling them what battle is like, and they begin to assume it's all fun. The first time they go into battle, they might have incorporated some of those assumptions into their behaviour, but they soon get it knocked out of them, and the cycle repeats itself. So the ritual was back soon enough."

Reflecting on the impact of the victory on Japan's psyche, Clements elaborates: "The real, long-running sense that was left behind wasn't so much about the outside world but about Japan's relation to it. It left the samurai with an overbearing confidence that they were somehow blessed by the gods and that they could hold off any attackers."

He continues: "It fuelled a certain supreme confidence that would see the attempted invasion of Korea in the late 16th century, and may have contributed to the closing of the country in the 17th century. In the 20th century, it may have added a fatal degree of assurance that if the Japanese just held out long enough, some magical turn of fate would allow them to hang onto their empire in the face of Allied advances. Of course, they even lifted the imagery of the 'divine wind' that would save the nation when naming their suicide pilots."



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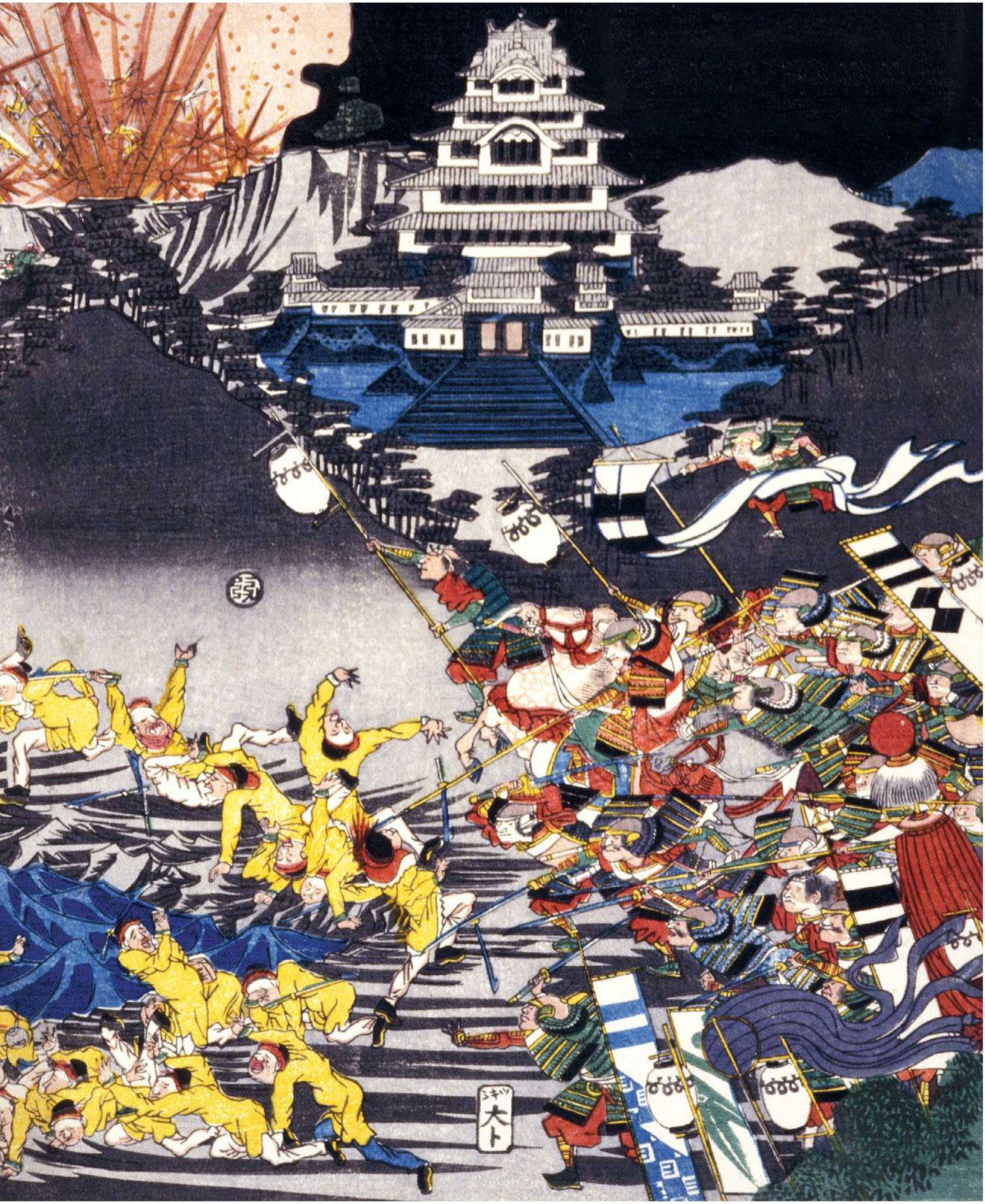
***Left:** The remnants of Kublai Khan's Mongol fleet during the second invasion of Japan in 1281 after the typhoon destroyed most of the armada. From Hutchinson's History of the Nations (1915)*

***Right:** Aided by remarkable martial skill and even more good fortune, Japan was one of the few powers to successfully resist the Mongol yoke. This highly stylised 19th-century illustration by Japanese artist Utagawa Kuniyuki depicts a Mongol landing being crushed by Japanese defenders on the coast*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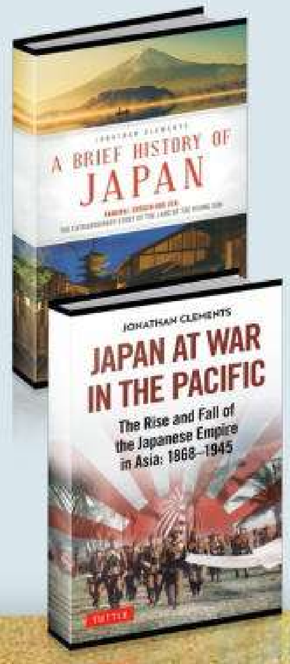
# CLASH OF CULTURES

## Q&A WITH JONATHAN CLEMENTS

With the Mongol way of war already a proven conquering force, the invasion of Japan was a clash of two unique warrior societies

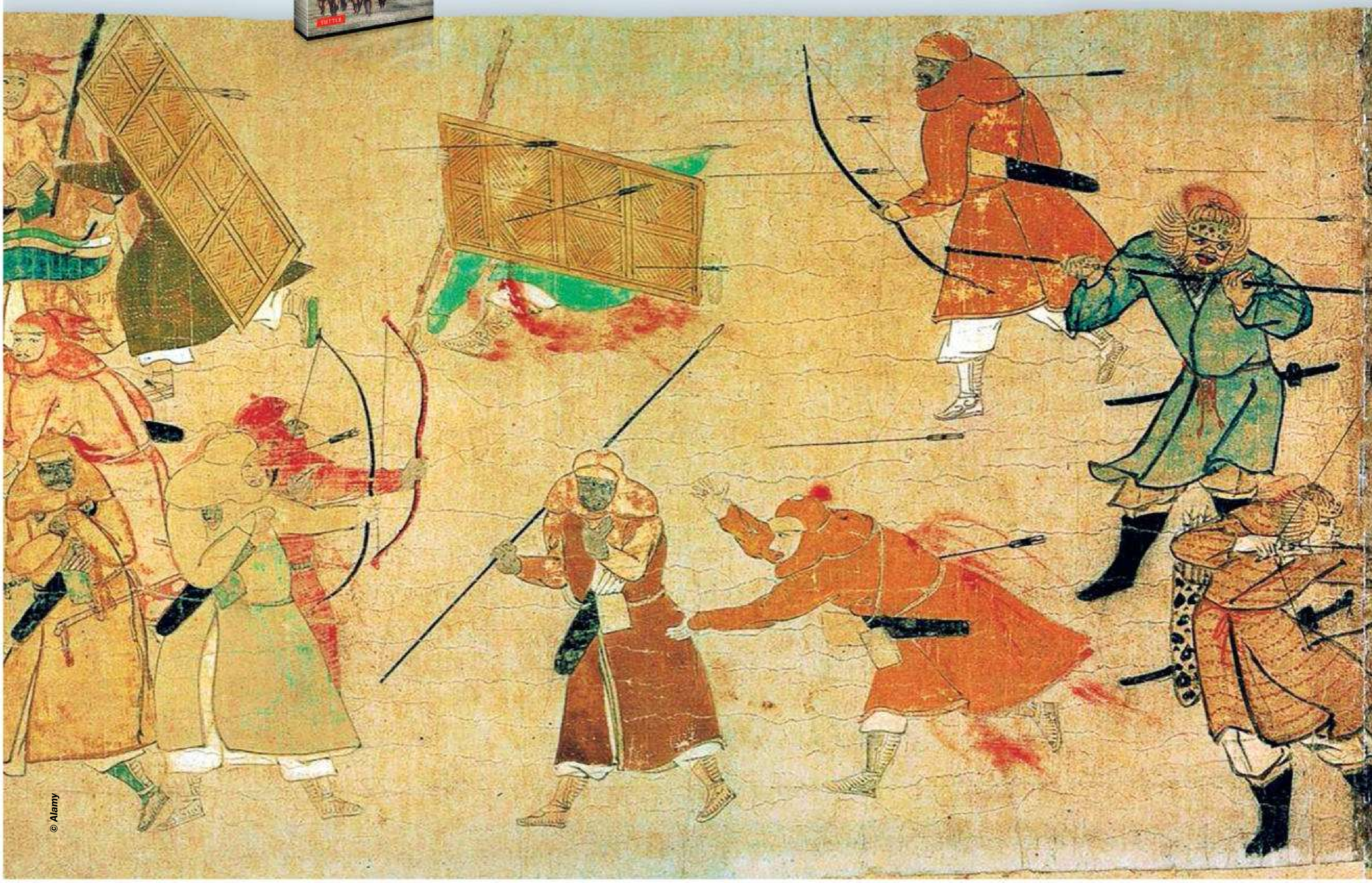
Jonathan Clements is the author of *A Brief History of Khubilai Khan* and *A Brief History of Japan*. His upcoming book, *Japan at War in the Pacific: The Rise and Fall of the Japanese Empire in Asia: 1868-1945*, will cover the rise and fall of the Japanese empire as told through propaganda songs.



**How well did the Mongols understand the samurai? And what did the samurai think of the Mongols?**
Something that the Mongols never seemed to appreciate was the degree of medieval 'phone tennis' that some states were willing to try. The Japanese gave them the run-around for years because it was never all that clear to them who was in charge – the emperor, or the shogun, or the shogun's regent. The Annamese, in what is now Vietnam, did the same thing, with the ruler agreeing to treaty demands and then abdicating, and his successor asking for clarifications, and so on.

The samurai did indeed think of the invaders as 'Mongols'. Many of them did not appreciate that many of the 'Mongol' troops facing them were actually Korean and Chinese conscripts.

**How well matched were the two armies?**
At a tactical level, it was anybody's guess. But in matters of invasion, the home team always has the advantage. The Mongols had long supply lines, a precarious hold on the bay and enemies manning a wall on the beach. I would say that in the very short-term the samurai had the upper hand, but it was blind luck and the weather that put them over the top.



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Mongol helmet taken as a trophy after the failed invasions

***What were the main ways the invasions influenced Japanese warfare?***
I think the real weakness that they exposed was that warfare in Japan was an acquisitional strategy. You went to war because if you won you got to keep all the enemy's stuff: his land and his treasure and his chattels. That all fell apart when the enemy was a phantom in a storm. The Japanese poured all those resources into a defensive operation but made no material gains with which to reward the various fighters. The long-term effect was an escalating instability that would eventually bring down the ruling families.

It also really brought adherents of Zen Buddhism to the fore, so in that sense it helped focus and concentrate the idea of Zen as a battlefield religion for the samurai class.

***To what extent did the invasions succeed in uniting the warriors and clans of Japan?***
The invasions united the whole country. Everybody was hell-bent on keeping the invaders out and, of course, in the aftermath even the Buddhist clergy were trying to claim part of the credit for the defeat of the enemy. But yes, at a tactical level, as so often happens on the samurai battlefield, there were a lot of young men desperate for glory and prepared to defy orders to make pre-emptive strikes.

Luckily, thanks to the defensive wall and the kamikaze, there was no real time for any such actions to undermine the strength of the main defence. So the strategy held, even if the tactics got messy.

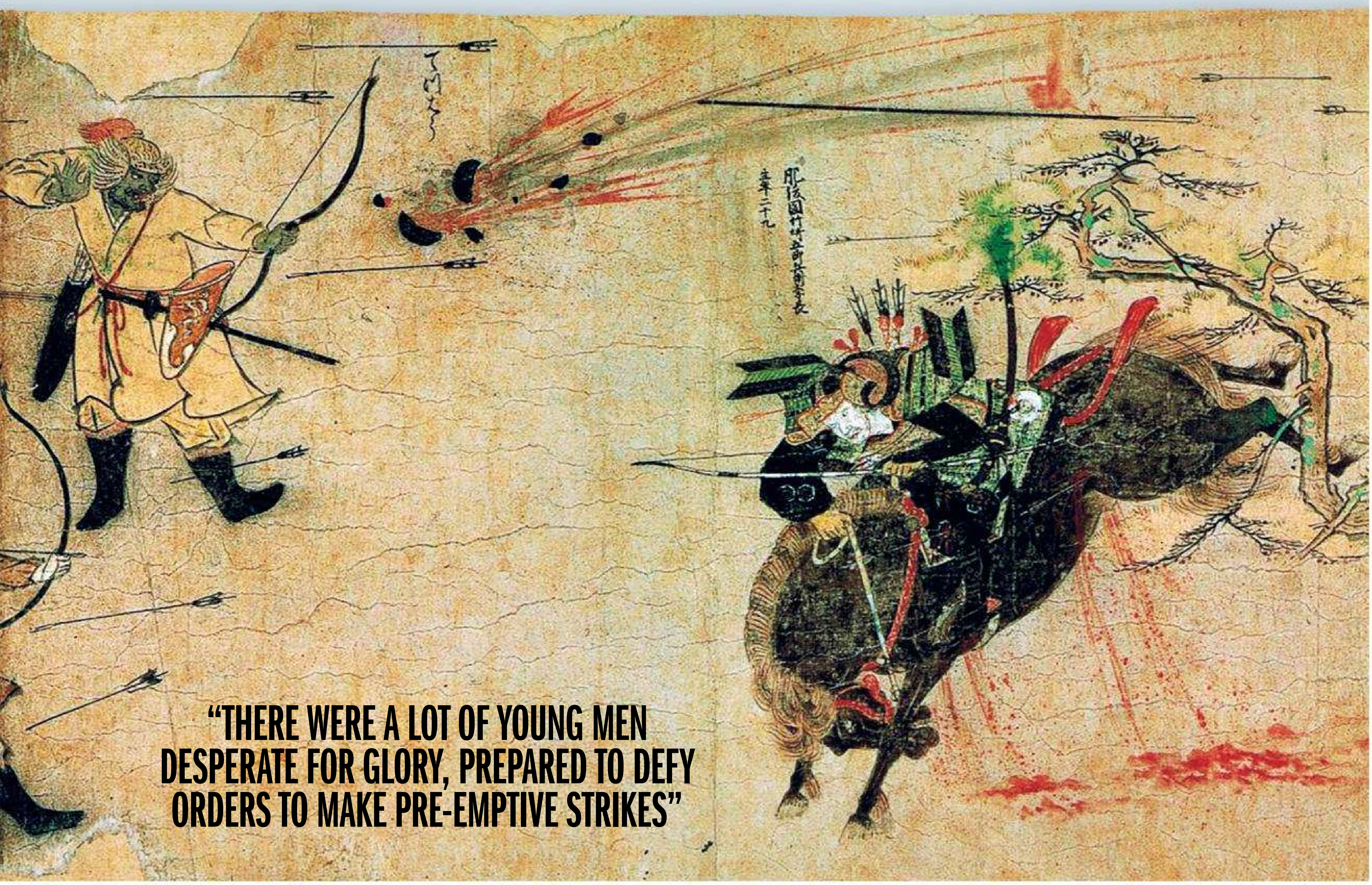
***Did the Japanese treat Korean and Chinese captives differently from the Mongols?***
Some of the Japanese certainly realised that there were Korean and Chinese crewmen on the ships who were less motivated to fight, but it was a lot more sinister than that. Takezaki Suenaga, for example, hatched a scheme whereby he would offer the sailors the chance to surrender on the understanding that they weren't motivated to fight. But once he had them in his clutches, he would kill them.

***How important were the Japanese guerrilla attacks? Did this strategy force the Mongols to bind their ships?***
I don't think the timeline supports that. We see the Mongols lashing their ships together soon after they arrive, not because of the guerrilla attacks but because they have failed to make an immediate landing. They are stuck out there in the bay, and we now know that many of their ships were old, poorly made or even little better than repurposed river boats, so they probably lashed them together for their own safety, to create a safer, floating fortress. That's fine, unless you get a storm whipping up huge waves and the boats start bashing into each other.

***What lessons did the Mongols take away from their failed invasion?***
We only know that it was a defeat in hindsight. There had been plenty of occasions when the Mongols had taken a couple of runs at something before winning through. Kublai ordered a third attack almost immediately and there were plenty of reasons to suggest that a third time would be the charm. There were reports of disputes among his leaders, and there was the matter of the blind chance of two massive storms at exactly the right time.

I don't think the Mongols learned anything at all. The men on the ground certainly got a first-hand understanding of how dangerous the samurai were, but the men on the ground weren't the decision-makers and often weren't even Mongols. The top brass was ready to go again, although they did listen to their accountants and tax officers.

**Below:** *Takezaki Suenaga was a prominent samurai leader during the invasions, depicted here charging archers and exploding bombs*



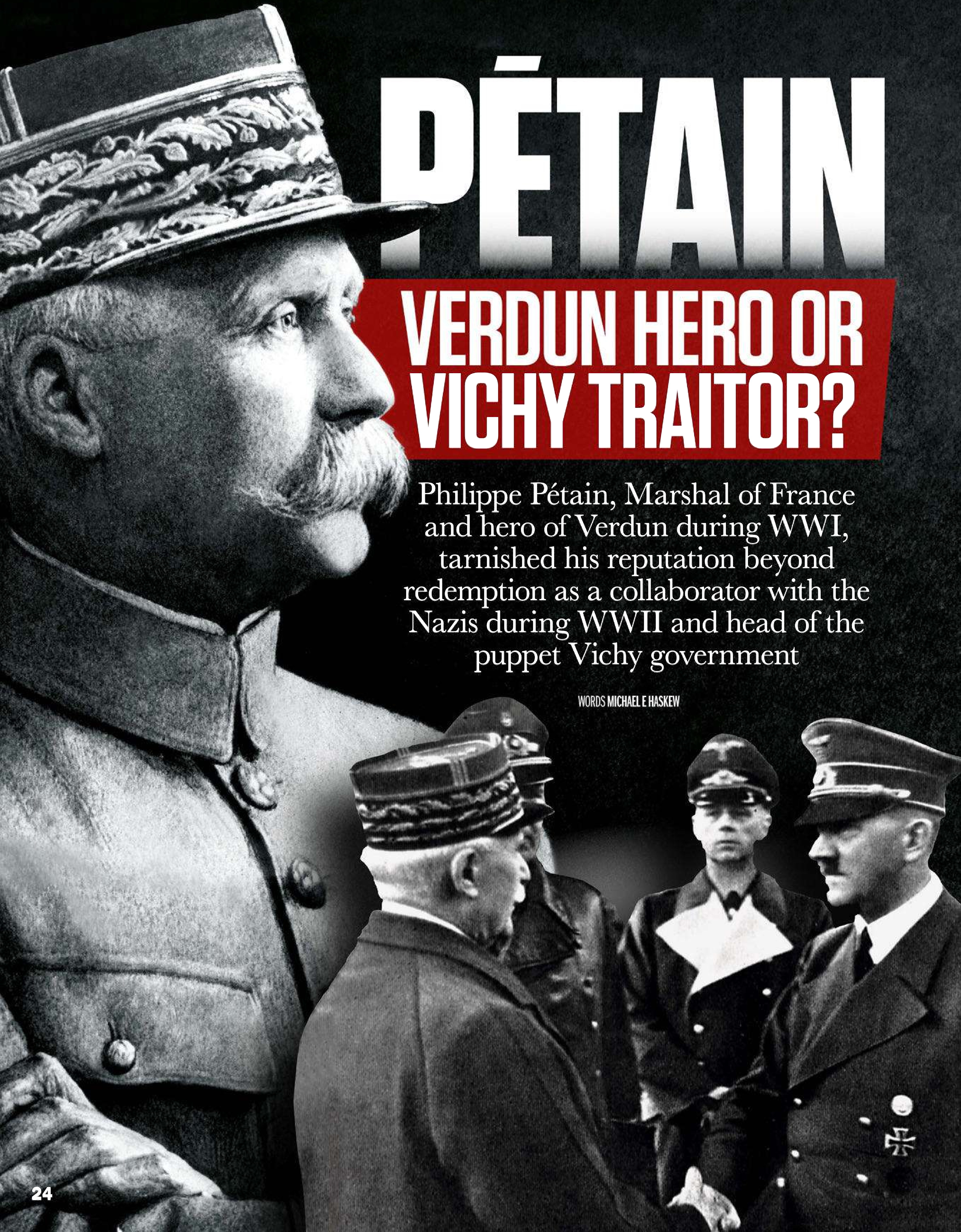
“THERE WERE A LOT OF YOUNG MEN DESPERATE FOR GLORY, PREPARED TO DEFY ORDERS TO MAKE PRE-EMPTIVE STRIKES”

# PÉTAIN

## VERDUN HERO OR VICHY TRAITOR?

Philippe Pétain, Marshal of France and hero of Verdun during WWI, tarnished his reputation beyond redemption as a collaborator with the Nazis during WWII and head of the puppet Vichy government

WORDS **MICHAEL E HASKEW**



Marshal Henri Philippe Pétain was a prominent figure in French political and military affairs during the first half of the 20th century. One of the most enigmatic individuals of modern history, Pétain became a national hero during the epic struggle at Verdun in World War I but tarnished his reputation beyond redemption a generation later, collaborating with the Nazis in 1940 and serving as head of the puppet Vichy government during World War II.

Pétain was an officer of the French Army, military strategist and tactician, diplomat, and politician. His career with the French Army spanned 46 years, during which he served as commander of all French troops during World War I, chief of staff of the army and minister of war. He also served as deputy prime minister and prime minister of the French Republic during the dark early days of World War II. Pétain subsequently became chief of the French State of Vichy, the puppet regime subservient to Adolf Hitler and the Nazis after the fall of France in the summer of 1940.

Pétain was born on 24 April 1856 in the village of Cauchy-á-la-Tour, in the Pas-de-Calais department of northern France. He was the son of a farmer, Omer-Venant, and his great uncle – Father Abbe Lefebvre – was a Catholic priest who had served in Napoleon's army. Tales of his great uncle's adventures during the fabled military campaigns of that era convinced young Philippe to pursue a military career.

Pétain was, for many years, a confirmed bachelor and womaniser. He did not marry until the autumn of 1920. His wife, Eugénie Hardon, was 43 years old and he was 64. The couple had no children. "Pétain was known as quick-witted and considered himself something of a ladies' man," says Dr Jonathan Krause, lecturer in Modern European History at Hertford College, University of Oxford. "He first met his future wife during the pre-World War I period, and she was about six years old at the time. He was pursuing the mother and kept in touch with the daughter over the years."

## March to the military

In 1876, at the age of 20, Pétain enlisted in the French Army. He graduated from the prestigious French Military Academy at St Cyr near the bottom of his class, 403rd of 412. Although his academic career was undistinguished, he managed to gain an assignment to the Chasseurs à pied, the army's elite light infantry unit. Pétain also attended the École Supérieure de Guerre, the Army War College, in Paris, but his performance there too was unremarkable.

"During the period of the 1880s there weren't a lot of opportunities for advancement," says Krause. "Pétain was never at the top of his class at any stage of his education but, interestingly, he did find himself in an elite infantry unit. He was always fairly political and tried to put himself in position for political power, but he was a prickly character even as a young man and known as deeply sarcastic, so he was not able to win many friends."

By 1890, Pétain had been promoted to the rank of captain and assigned to the 15th Corps. Two years later, he was elevated to command the 3rd Battalion of Chasseurs, headquartered at Vincennes. For the next decade, Pétain held assignments as a staff officer to the military commander of Paris and trained in artillery and ordnance, becoming an authority on the topics.

Pétain favoured concentrated firepower, delivered by heavy guns, over the massed infantry attack that was intended to decide an engagement at the point of the bayonet or the obsolescent cavalry charge. His views were somewhat controversial but their veracity was borne out on the battlefields of World War I

**Opposite, left:** *The French leader during WWII cooperated with the victorious Nazis*

**Opposite, bottom-right:** *Marshal Pétain shakes hands with Adolf Hitler at Montoire on 24 October 1940 in a deal that established the puppet state of Vichy*

**Below:** *General Pétain decorates two flags with the Legion of Honour, France 1917*

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"PÉTAIN FAVOURED CONCENTRATED FIREPOWER, DELIVERED BY HEAVY GUNS, OVER THE MASSED INFANTRY ATTACK THAT WAS INTENDED TO DECIDE AN ENGAGEMENT AT THE POINT OF THE BAYONET"

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as outmoded tactics cost the lives of many thousands of soldiers, failing in the face of new technology, particularly the lethal machine gun that swept the open ground of No Man's Land between the trenches.

## Into the Great War

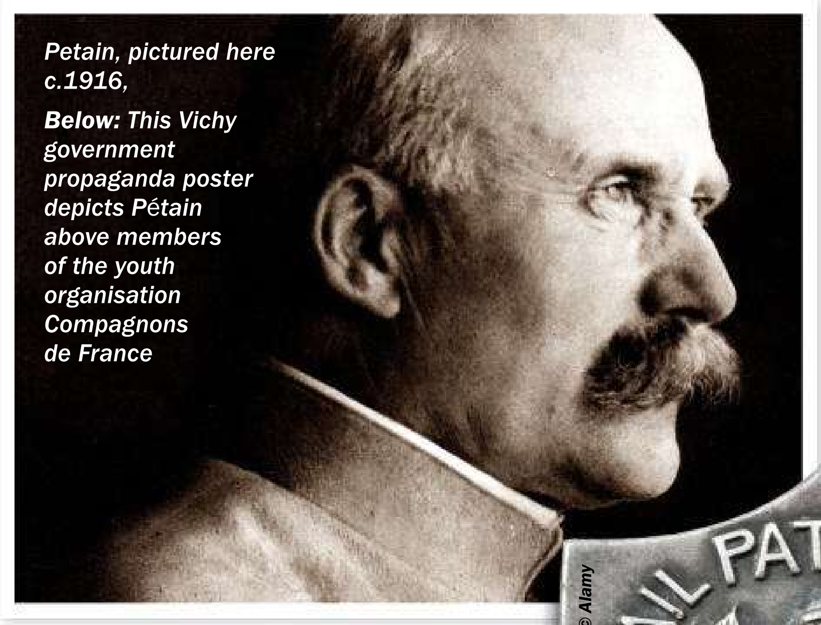
Pétain's controversial views on the conduct of modern warfare undoubtedly impacted his upward mobility in the French Army prior to World War I. On the eve of the conflict he was a rather obscure 58-year-old colonel commanding an infantry brigade, but as the war progressed his theories of concentrated firepower gained momentum and promotion came steadily. Advancement was partially due to the sobering fact that many French officers had been killed in action seeking glory on the battlefield while leading their troops in suicidal frontal attacks against German machine guns and paying with their lives.

By now a colonel, Pétain led his brigade into action at the Battle of Guise in late August 1914. The result was a thorough defeat for the French, and Pétain was promoted to brigadier general a day after the fighting subsided. He replaced General Pierre Peslin, who committed suicide in despair. Swiftly, Pétain was given command of the 6th Infantry Division and took part in the First Battle of the Marne. He was promoted again in October and took command of the XXXIII Corps, participating in the Artois Offensive in the spring of 1915. By mid-summer he was leading the entire 2nd Army.

## Crucible of Verdun

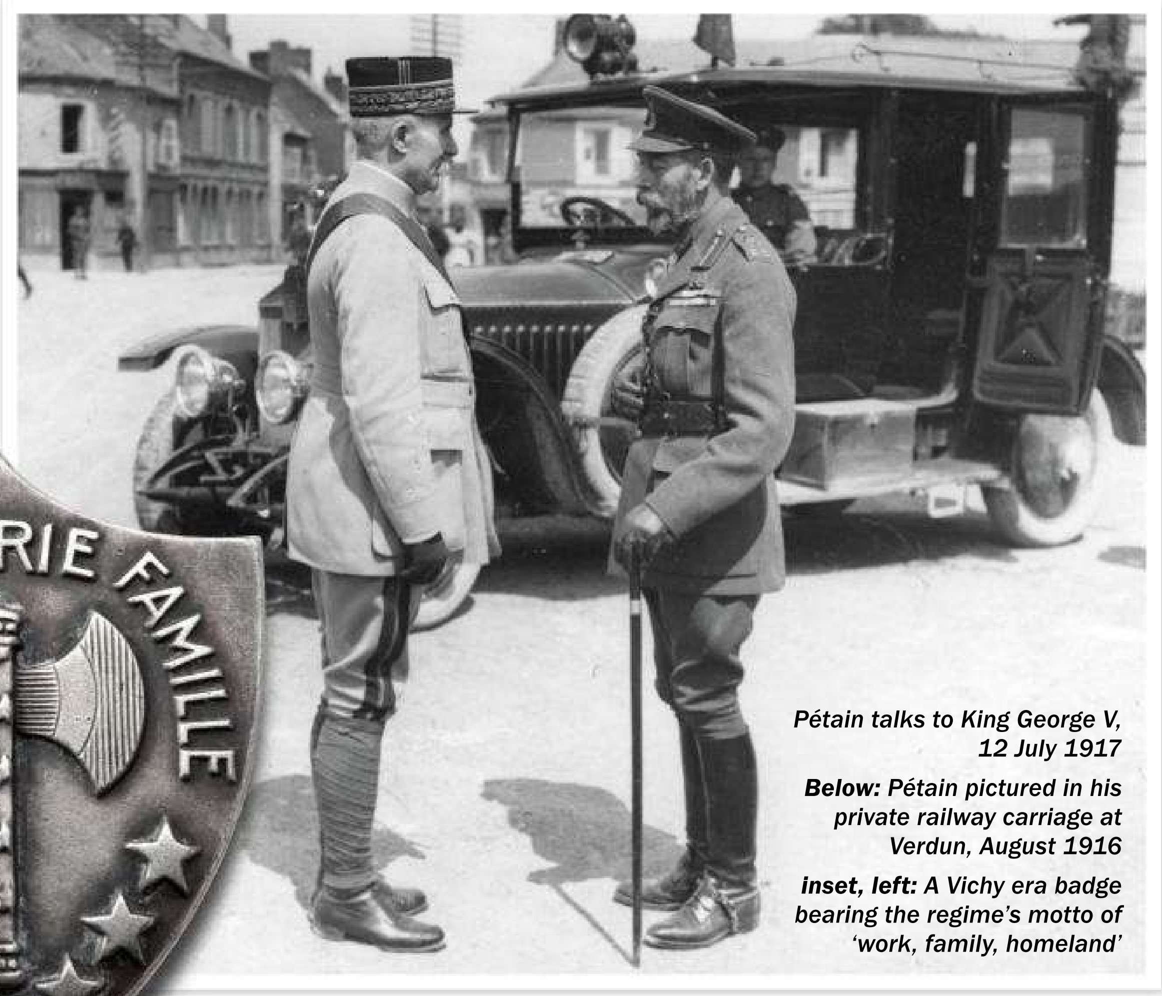
In the winter of 1916, the French Army was embroiled in a deadly struggle with the Germans at Verdun, a fortified city and environs on the River Meuse, 200km east of Paris. The Germans, led by General Erich von Falkenhayn and Crown Prince Wilhelm, eldest son of Kaiser Wilhelm II, had launched the major operation with the intent to bleed the French forces white, inflicting so many casualties that France might be compelled to seek an armistice due to lack of manpower available to prosecute the war. The French, under Field Marshal Joseph Joffre, were preoccupied with events elsewhere and slow to respond to the German buildup of forces in the vicinity of Verdun. When they did respond, the French committed tremendous resources to hold the fortified city and a gruesome battle of attrition ensued.

The Battle of Verdun began on 21 February 1916, and the Germans made significant advances during the opening phase. When the 2nd Army was ordered into action, General Pétain became conspicuous among the troops, frequently visiting his men in the front lines while few other officers dared venture close to the fighting. In doing so, Pétain bolstered the morale of his men and in turn they greatly admired him. On 25 February, he was elevated to command all French forces in the Région Fortifiée de Verdun, and in May he was promoted to command of Army Group Centre. As an artilleryman, the general recognised the inherent inefficiency of the French heavy guns. He brought in additional heavy-calibre weapons and reoriented their focus to achieve



*Petain, pictured here c.1916,*

***Below:** This Vichy government propaganda poster depicts Pétain above members of the youth organisation Compagnons de France*



*Pétain talks to King George V, 12 July 1917*

***Below:** Pétain pictured in his private railway carriage at Verdun, August 1916*

***inset, left:** A Vichy era badge bearing the regime's motto of 'work, family, homeland'*

TRAVAIL PATRIE FAMILLE

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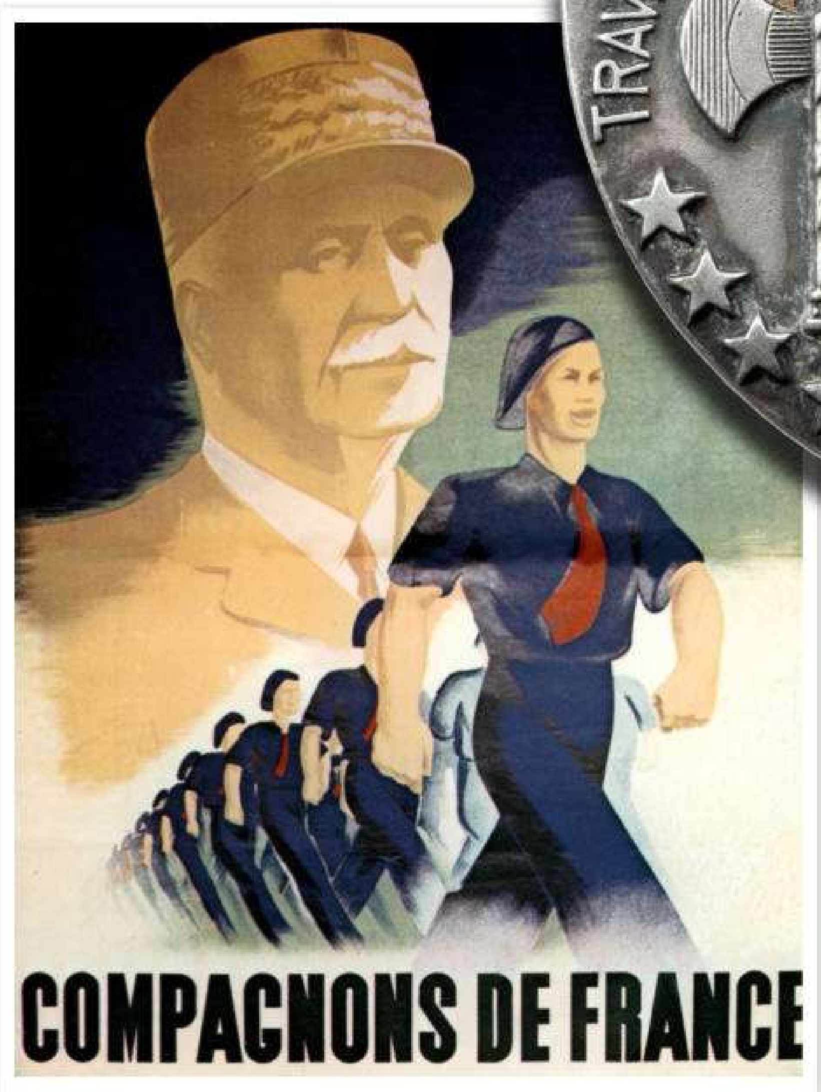

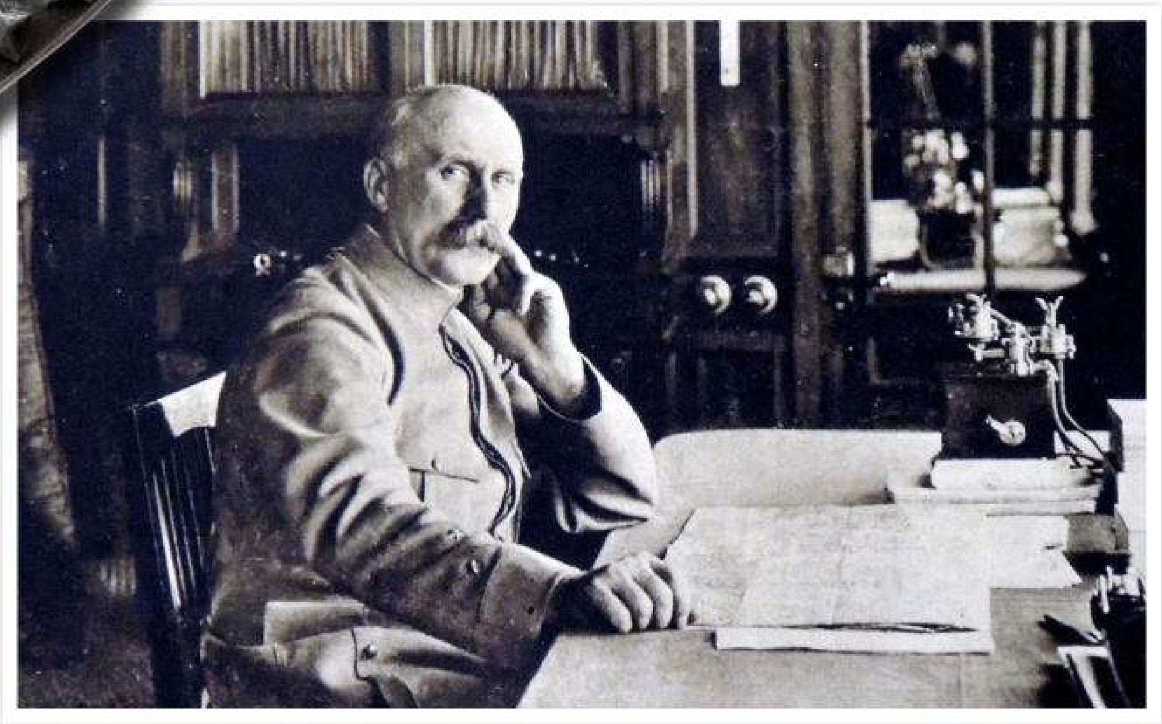

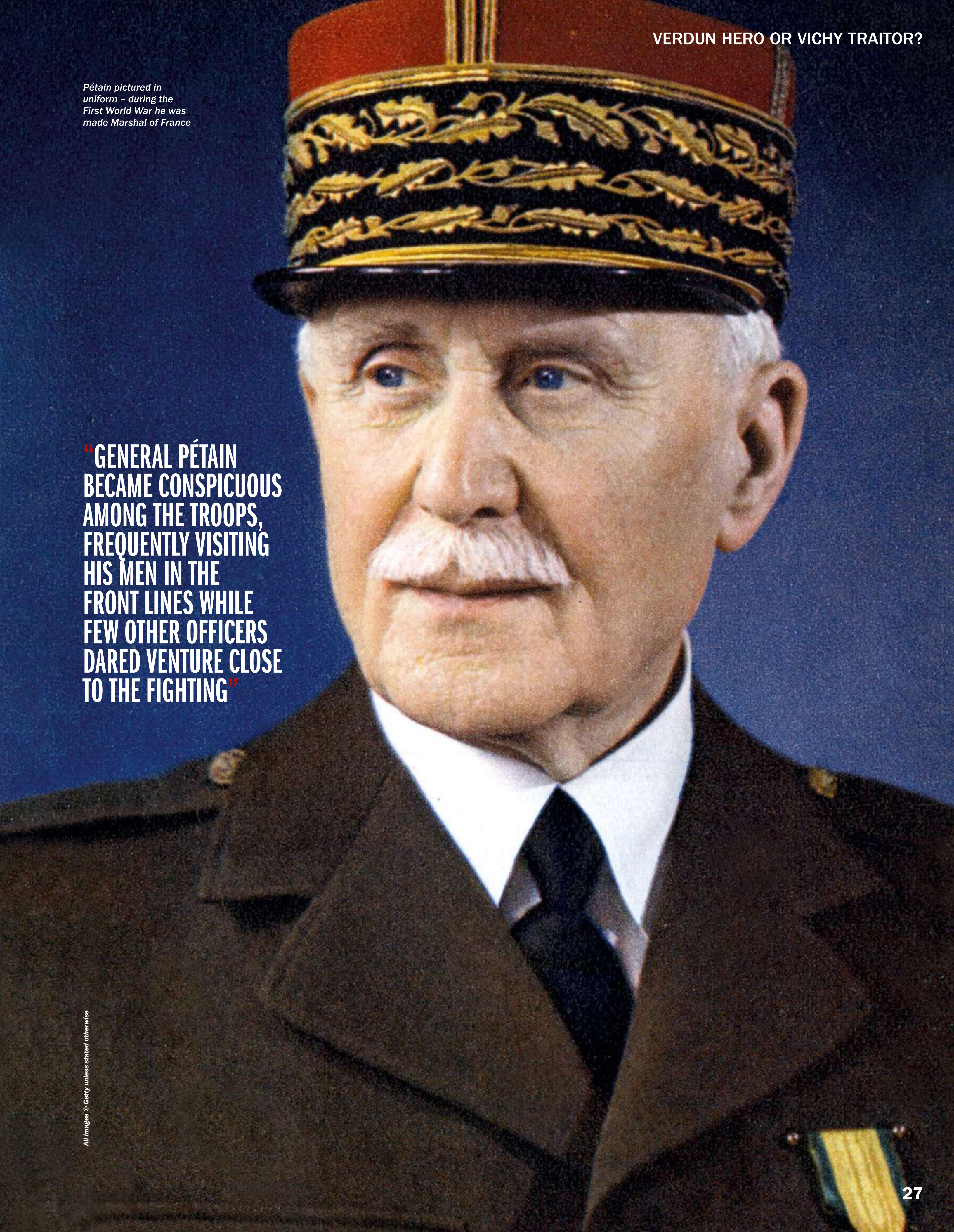

Pétain pictured in uniform – during the First World War he was made Marshal of France

> “GENERAL PÉTAIN BECAME CONSPICUOUS AMONG THE TROOPS, FREQUENTLY VISITING HIS MEN IN THE FRONT LINES WHILE FEW OTHER OFFICERS DARED VENTURE CLOSE TO THE FIGHTING”

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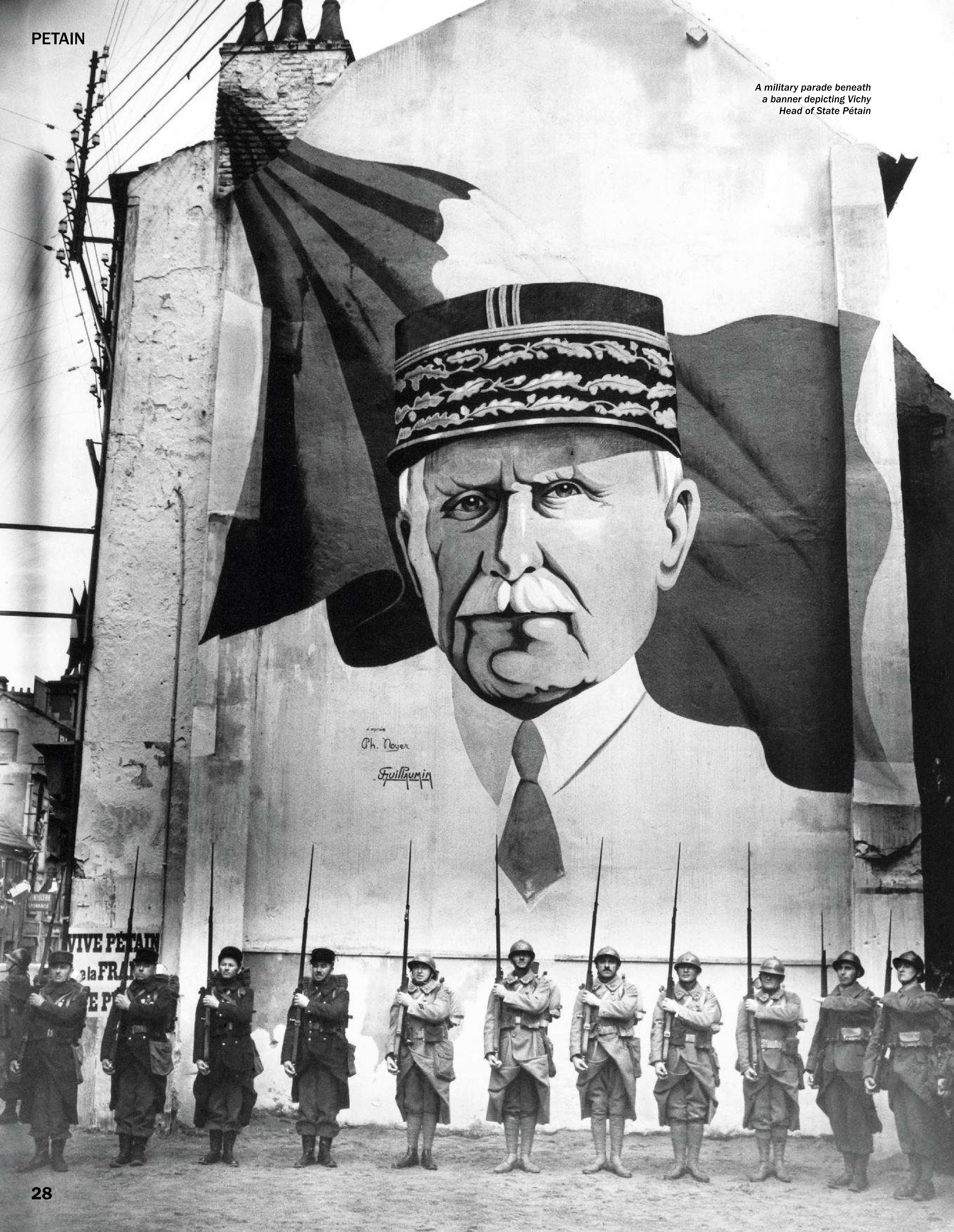
d'après
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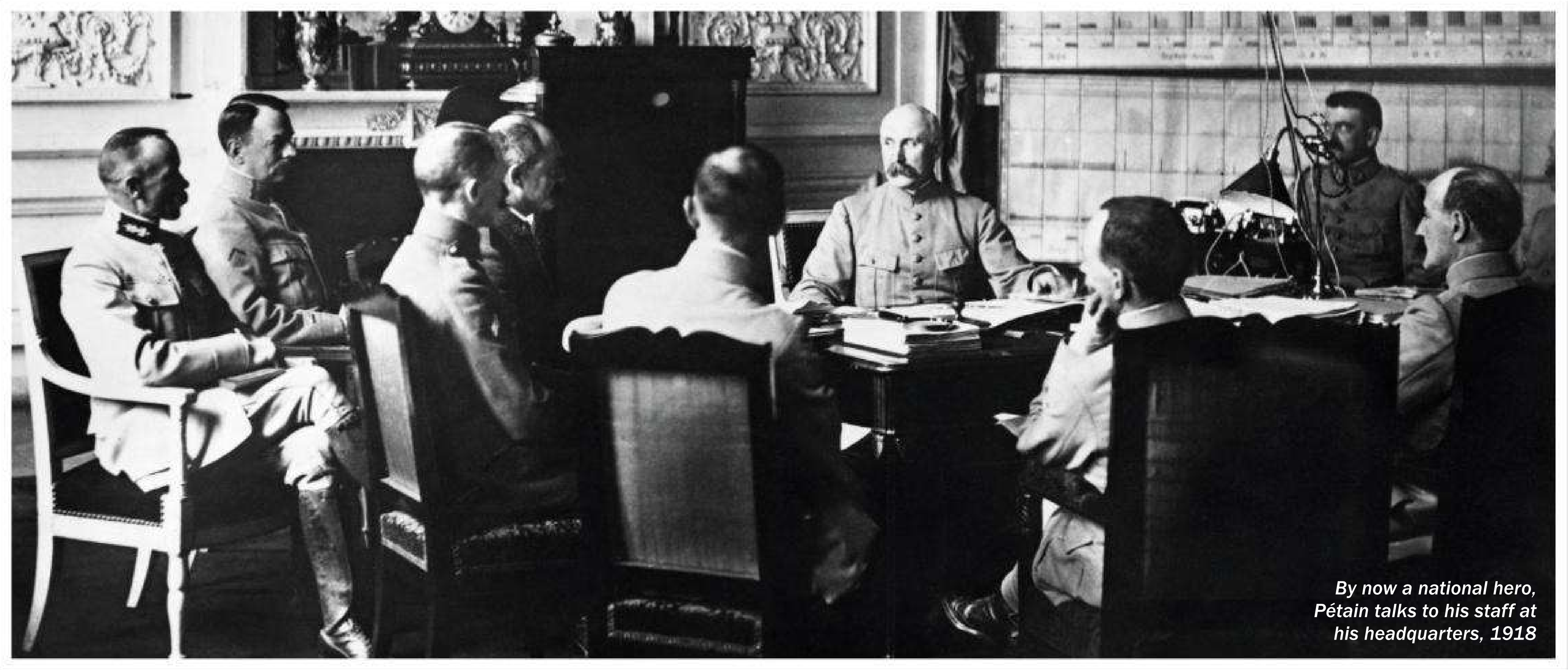
*A military parade beneath a banner depicting Vichy Head of State Pétain*



By now a national hero, Pétain talks to his staff at his headquarters, 1918

better results, particularly against the German flanks. He was known to personally evaluate and adjust firing coordinates of individual guns, improving accuracy along with the efficient use of scarce ammunition.

"Obviously, Verdun began poorly for the French," observes Krause. "They were outnumbered and outgunned, and the Germans had taken up excellent positions surrounding them. When Pétain took command, he took care of some long-standing issues with the troops. He increased things like leave and introduced more rapid rotation of troops from the front line to keep troops healthy and at their fighting best, while the Germans left people in the lines for long periods and their combat efficiency would diminish."

At the age of 60, Pétain exuded vitality. He praised the brave and cashiered 'cowards' from the combat zone, and his rotation policy – known as 'noria' – helped preserve the combat capability of beleaguered French soldiers. The French continually wrestled with supply deficiencies, depending on a single narrow road that was nicknamed the Vioe Sacrée, or Sacred Way. Pétain ensured that this supply line remained open and improved a light railway into the French defensive salient to enhance logistics.

French forces at Verdun eventually grew to more than a million soldiers, and Pétain's grasp of the situation saved the Allied cause from a catastrophic defeat. The motto "On ne passé pas!" or "They shall not pass!" became a rallying cry. By early summer the critical moment at Verdun had passed. The fighting continued until mid-December, and the French line held.

> "AT THE AGE OF 60, PÉTAIN EXUDED VITALITY. HE PRAISED THE BRAVE AND CASHIERED 'COWARDS' FROM THE COMBAT ZONE"

The Vichy leader is greeted by adoring crowds, 30 July 1944

*All images © Getty*

## National hero

After his performance at Verdun, Pétain was lauded as a national hero and named commander-in-chief of the army in the spring of 1917. He ruthlessly quelled a mutiny within the ranks and for the remainder of the Great War maintained a command role subordinate only to General Ferdinand Foch, who was chief of the general staff and supreme commander of Allied forces. Pétain was elevated to the rank of marshal of France on 21 November 1918, just 10 days after the armistice.

Throughout the inter-war period, he was the best-known soldier of France. "Pétain's military career pretty well ends following the First World War," says Krause, "but he is a celebrity in Paris and lives the life of someone who is perceived as one of the saviours of France, yet he isn't someone that you would necessarily imagine being a person of great political influence 20 years later."

Nevertheless, Pétain did exert some influence on the French political scene and the military preparations to perhaps fight another major war in Europe. He contributed to the design and location of tactical strongpoints along the Maginot Line, a string of fortifications intended to dissuade the Germans from invading France from the east, and he served briefly as minister of war in the 1930s during a period of austerity in defence spending due to the huge cost of the Great War and impact of the Great Depression. There was talk of his rising to head of state, and in 1939 he was appointed ambassador to Spain.

## Twilight of collaboration

Even as the aged Marshal Pétain assumed his diplomatic role, war clouds gathered over Europe once more. The rise of Nazi Germany threatened the peace, and the storm broke on 1 September 1939 with Adolf Hitler's invasion of Poland. Both France and Great Britain, obligated by treaty to come to the aid of Poland, declared war on Germany.

The early months of World War II in the west of Europe were rather uneventful. During a period derisively called the Sitzkrieg, or

© Getty

After the war Pétain claimed he had cooperated with Hitler to protect the French from further Nazi excesses

**Left:** Hermann Göring meets Pétain in Saint-Florentin, December 1941

© Getty

Phoney War, the lines were static. Allied and German troops eyed one another warily but refrained from sustained combat. Then, on 10 May 1940, the Germans launched Fall Gelb, or Case Yellow, their invasion of France and the Low Countries.

The tremendous Nazi onslaught drove the French and British back, and Prime Minister Paul Reynaud resigned on 17 June 1940, three days after Paris fell to the advancing enemy. The 84-year-old Marshal Pétain was appointed as Reynaud's successor. As France reeled, Pétain led a defeatist faction of the government, advocating an armistice with the Germans rather than continuing a fight that he considered hopeless. He offered the French people the "gift of his person" and promised to remain in France rather than attempting to flee to the colonies of North Africa or the safety of Britain as other military and political leaders had done.

With the honour of France in tatters, Pétain met with Hitler just eight days after the Nazis paraded through the streets of the French capital and negotiated a debilitating peace agreement that established the puppet state of Vichy. The humiliation of France was complete as Pétain accepted the post of Vichy Head of State. He openly collaborated with the Nazis, exerting authoritarian control, sanctioning the repression of French Jewry and enacting right-wing laws. He gave the Nazis free rein to round up non-French Jews and deport them to concentration camps in Germany and the occupied territories.

"The standard explanation, the usual sort of line, is that Pétain was so scared by the losses in the First World War that he was not willing to suffer that again," says Krause. "His conservatism and, I believe probably his anti-Semitism, effectively gave him the reasoning to relinquish control of France to Nazi Germany."

Pétain placed a death sentence in absentia on Free French leader Charles de Gaulle, his one-time protégé, and brought his own deputy, the odious Pierre Laval, to the forefront of Vichy diplomacy in the spring of 1942. The pro-Nazi government offered the people of France a "national revival", displacing the well-known slogan of the French Republic – "Liberte, Equality, Fraternity" – with a sombre and hollow "Work, Family, Country."

> "HIS ICONIC REPUTATION FROM THE FIRST WORLD WAR WAS NOT NEARLY ENOUGH TO COUNTER HIS COLLABORATION WITH THE NAZIS. ONCE YOU CROSS SUCH A LINE, THERE JUST ISN'T MUCH THAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT"

"I don't see how anyone could say that Pétain was not complicit with the Nazis in many ways, including the deportation of Jews to Nazi Germany," says Krause. "His iconic reputation from the First World War was not nearly enough to counter his collaboration with the Nazis. Once you cross such a line, there just isn't much that can be done about it."

Retribution for Pétain and the Vichy collaborationists came swiftly after the Allied victory in World War II. Laval was tried, convicted of treason and executed on 15 October 1945. Pétain was also put on trial, wearing the uniform of a Marshal of France throughout the proceedings. He asserted that he was not answerable to the tribunal and said: "The High Court, as constituted, does not represent the French people, and it is to them alone that the Marshal of France, Head of State, will address himself."

Pétain claimed that he had played a "double game", collaborating with the Nazis while attempting to safeguard his people from further excesses during the occupation. He was quiet for the remainder of the trial, and the extent of his cooperation with the Nazis was readily apparent. He was convicted of treason in the summer of 1945 and sentenced to death. However, de Gaulle stepped in and commuted the sentence to life in prison. With the exception of the rank of Marshal of France, Pétain was stripped of all military honours and titles.

"Pétain is still a low figure in French history, a bête noir, if you will, and for good reason" Krause concludes. "He was prominent during one of the darkest periods in the history of France, so France has had to be conscious of its image during the Second World War, not just its defeat in 1940 but what is properly shameful in the amount of collaboration with the Nazis that took place across French society. Then there is the talk that the size and importance of the French resistance to the Nazis is actually exaggerated. It puts France as a nation on the right side of history, but it is an impossible position."

Certainly, Pétain is remembered as being on the wrong side. He was exiled to the windswept Ile d'Yeu south of the Brittany peninsula to live out his life in ignominy. And a long life it was. He died on the desolate island on 23 July 1951 at the age of 95 and was buried there. Perhaps fittingly, his last wish to be interred among the soldiers who had fallen under his command at Verdun was denied by the government of France.

## FURTHER READING

- ✪ ***Petain: A Biography of Marshal Philippe Pétain of Vichy*** by Richard M Griffiths, Doubleday (1970)
- ✪ ***Pétain: Verdun to Vichy*** by Robert B Bruce, Potomac Books (2008)

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The disgraced French leader was convicted of treason in the summer of 1945. His death sentence was commuted to life in prison

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# THE REAL TOP GUN

WORDS **STUART HADAWAY**

From humble beginnings the US Navy Fighter Weapons School was instrumental in turning the tide of the air war over Vietnam

The United States Navy (USN) Fighter Weapons School was established in 1969 in an attempt to stem US losses in the air war over Vietnam. Soon dubbed 'Top Gun', the school taught dogfighting skills to a generation of pilots who were reliant on missiles and technology, and the training turned the tide of the air war.

From 1965 to 1968 the US mounted Operation Rolling Thunder, part of its war with the communist Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam). The US was supporting the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam) in its campaign to stem a North Vietnamese invasion, a conflict that was all part of the wider Cold War. A bombing campaign was started in an attempt to undermine the North's military capabilities and political will, but the supposedly primitive North Vietnamese air defences proved a tough nut to crack. Soviet and Chinese support allowed them to build an impressive ground-to-air missile and anti-aircraft gun defence system, and also provided small numbers of modern jet fighters. To the surprise and alarm of the US, these proved highly effective and USN. and US Air Force (USAF) air-to-air combat losses mounted.

The US problem lay in doctrine, and from that training and technology. Since the Korean War the US fighter forces had been trained only to intercept Soviet nuclear bombers – large, lumbering targets that could not manoeuvre. Dogfighting – classic fighter-vs-fighter tactics – was not taught to new pilots. Instead, new generations of air-to-air missiles were developed and most frontline aircraft were no longer fitted with machine guns or cannon. Missiles proved highly effective when launched under test conditions in the US,

UNITED STATES NAVY FIGHTER WEAPONS SCHOOL
TOP GUN

Image: Wiki / PD / Gov

**Above:** *The iconic Top Gun unit patch*

*Probably the most famous Top Gun aircraft was the Grumman F-14 Tomcat* in straight and level flight against equally steady targets. However, in the humid skies of North Vietnam and under combat conditions, they proved deeply flawed. Even the AIM-9 Sidewinder heat-seeking missile, which would go on to see over 60 years of successful use in air forces around the world, had severe teething problems. Early models suffered a 56% failure-to-launch rate, and if launched missed 28% of targets. AIM-7 Sparrows had even worse failure and hit rates, and without guns to fall back on fighter pilots were faced with a frustrating inability to bring down the enemy. With enemy fighters slipping easily past the escorts, US bomber casualties were mounting.

## Ault report and Top Gun

While the USAF decided that better missiles and technology were the answer, the USN came to a different conclusion. In 1968 Captain Frank Ault was tasked with compiling a report on the failures and finding solutions. Ault's team studied the issues and submitted their report on 1 January 1969. Among various technological and organisational recommendations was the establishment of a USN Fighter Weapons School. More than just a training school, this would be an academy for the sharing of experience and the development of new doctrine and tactics.

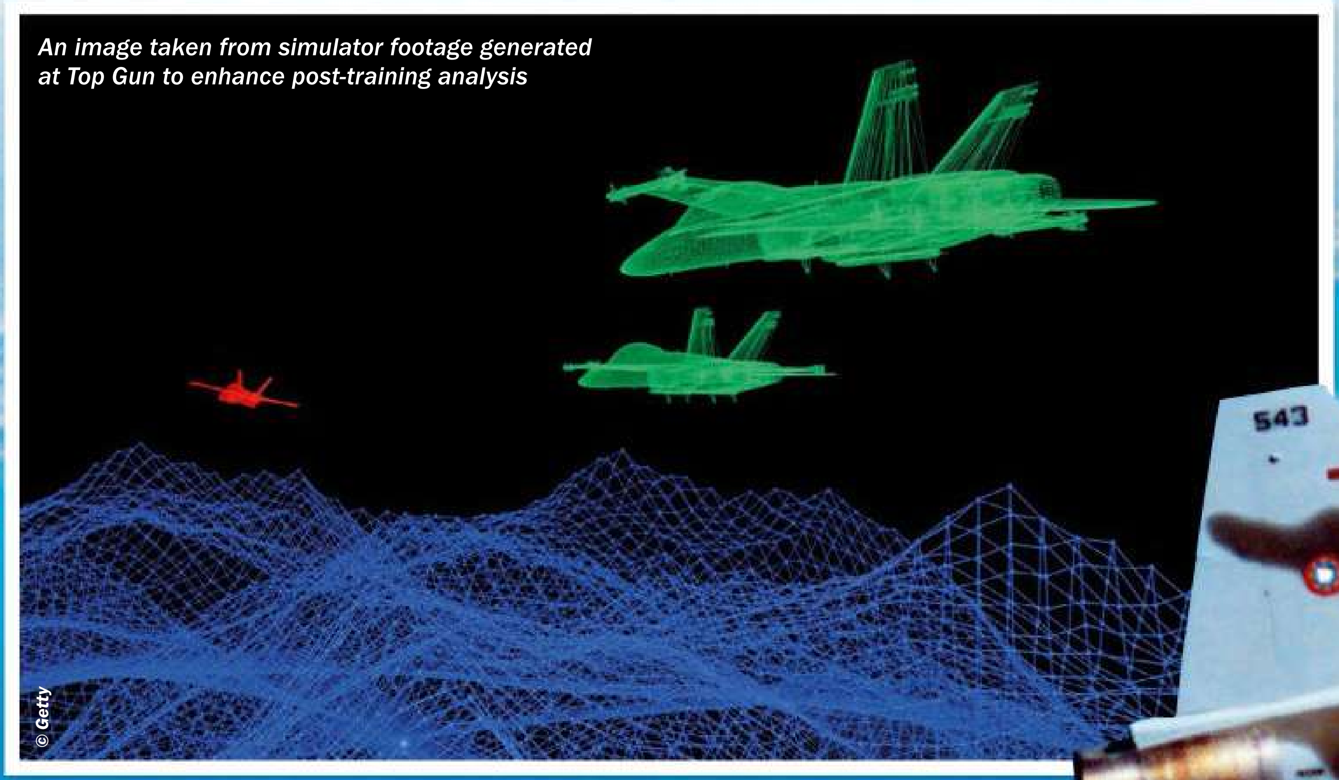
“HIS TEAM ARE KNOWN IN TOP GUN HISTORY AS ‘THE ORIGINAL BROS’, AND THEY HAD A TOUGH STRUGGLE AHEAD”

Instructors were to be highly experienced personnel, and no lecture would be given to the students without first being passed by the ‘Murder Board’ of other instructors, who would question the new presenters mercilessly. Students were to be drawn from experienced crew on operational units – this would not be simply another step in the initial training programme. The knowledge and experience of the students would be fed back into the courses.

Preparations for the establishment of the school at Naval Air Station (NAS) Miramar near San Diego had begun in 1968, even before Ault made his final report. Lieutenant Commander Dan Pedersen was given a small staff but very little else. His team are known in Top Gun history as ‘The Original Bros’, and they had a tough struggle ahead. Historian Thomas McKelvey Cleaver, in *The Tonkin Gulf Yacht Club: Naval Aviation in the Vietnam War*, writes: “Together, they built the Naval Fighter Weapons School syllabus and created the school with no support. Steve Smith, whom Pedersen had chosen for his ability to get things done without reference to the bureaucracy when necessary… found a dilapidated 10-by-40-foot trailer that appeared abandoned then cajoled a crane driver into moving it into place next to a hangar with an offer of a case of Scotch.” Furniture had to be scrounged and the trailer repainted by the ‘Bros’ in their off-duty hours – a far cry from the later glamour enjoyed by Top Gun. In March 1969, the training centre opened its doors to its first class of students.

## Top Gun success

The courses at Top Gun provided a range of classroom-based and practical lessons. Initially geared around the F-4 Phantom, the school



*An image taken from simulator footage generated at Top Gun to enhance post-training analysis*

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543
NAVY
42
544
NAVY
44

*Northrop F-5s were ideal ‘aggressors’ for Top Gun, being smaller and nimbler than most American fighters*

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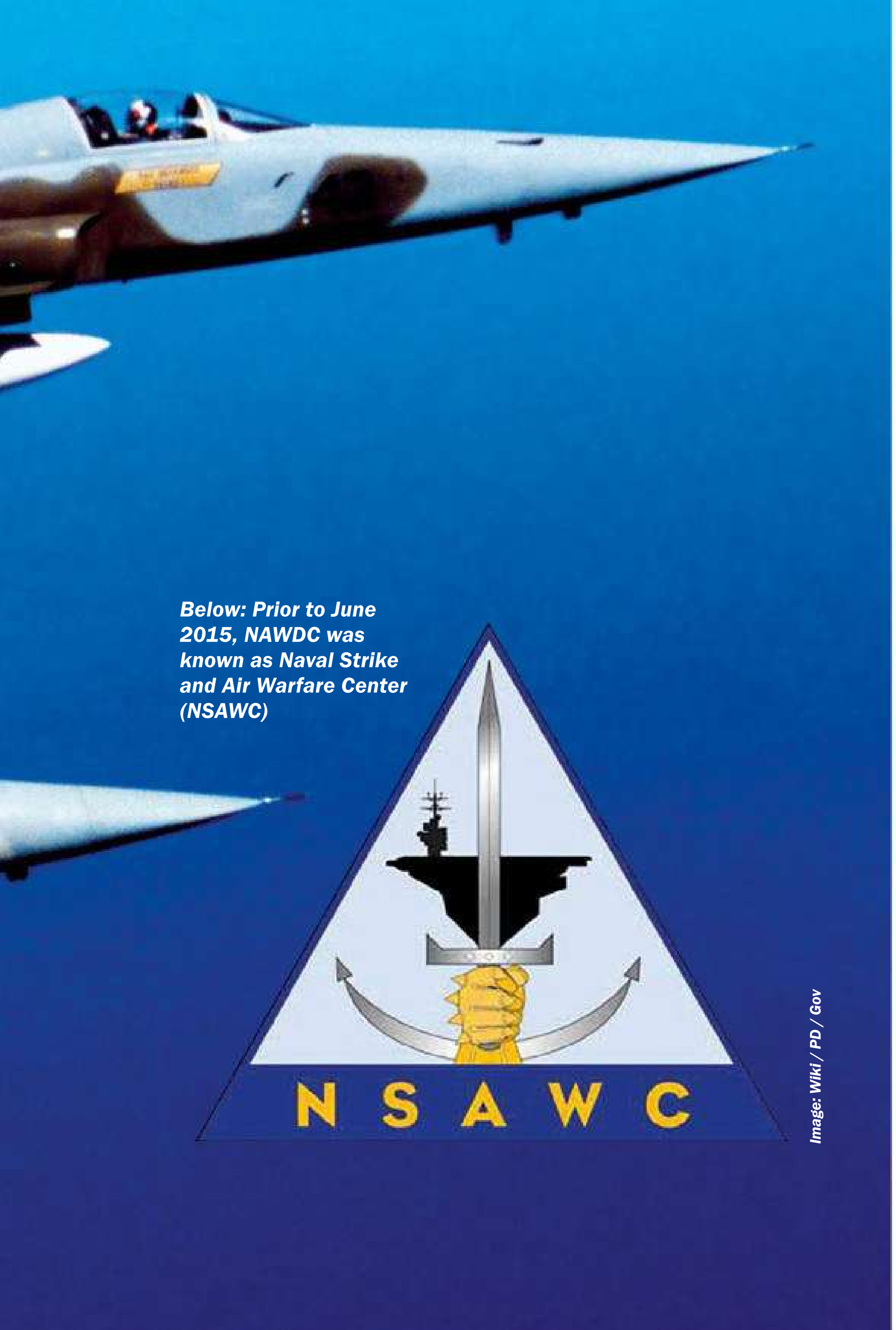
rapidly expanded to provide for F-8 Crusader crews, and later the newer F-14 Tomcat and F-18 Hornet. Instructors flew a range of small, light ‘aggressor’ aircraft to simulate the MiG-17s flown by the North Vietnamese. The favoured type was the A-4 Skyhawk, but A-6 Intruders, A-7 Corsairs and USAF F-106 Delta Darts were all used to provide as broad an experience as possible. Even Soviet types were used.

Aircrews studied enemy doctrine and equipment as well as their own, and the school was largely aimed at working around the shortcomings of the missiles then available. Students practised intercepts with other fighters across a range of scenarios and worked on how to allow for their equipment’s limitations and use them to their best effect. Gunnery and dogfighting skills were also taught. Crews were selected from USN and US Marine units across the Fleet. When they returned to their units, students were expected to pass their new skills and knowledge on to their comrades, lecturing and instructing their fellows to improve quality across the board.

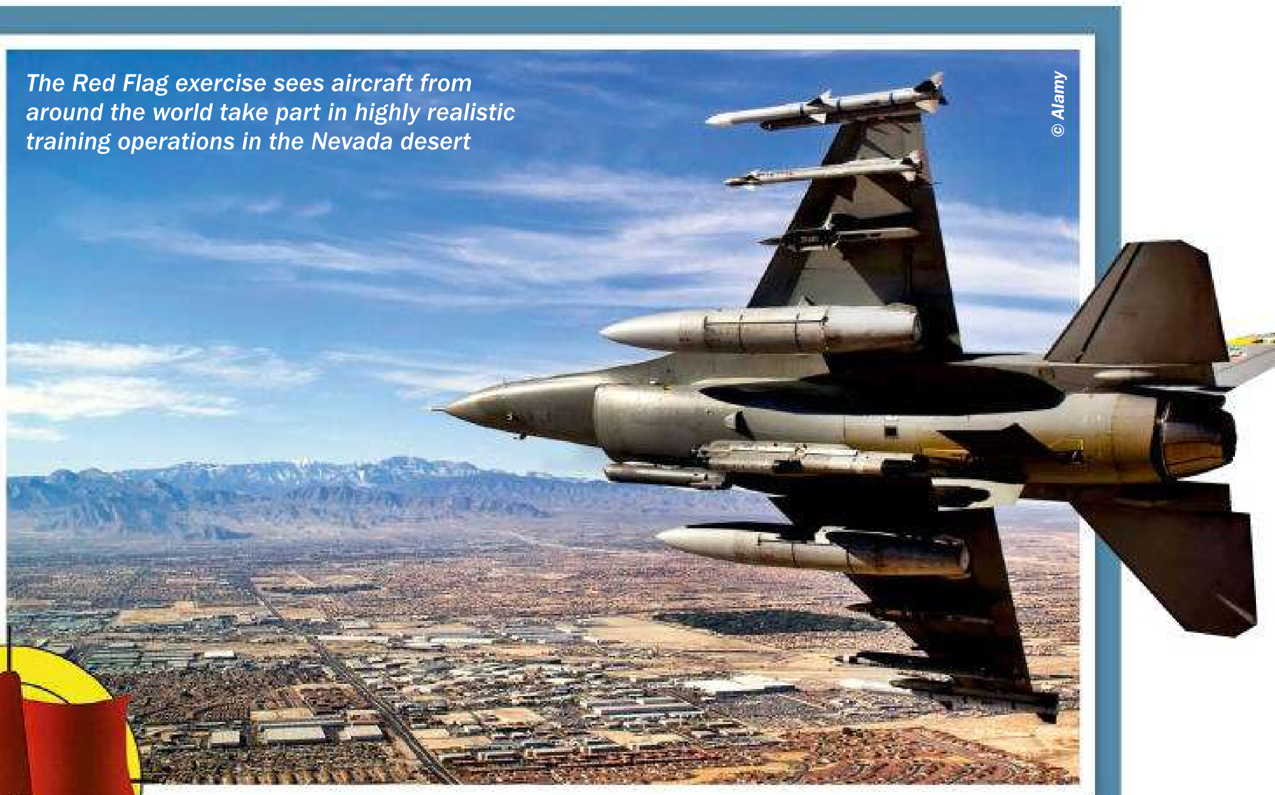
In Vietnam, the improvements took a little while to take effect. Operations over North



*Below: Prior to June 2015, NAWDC was known as Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center (NSAWC)*

NSAWC

Image: Wiki / PD / Gov



*The Red Flag exercise sees aircraft from around the world take part in highly realistic training operations in the Nevada desert*

© Alamy

## EXERCISE RED FLAG

The United States Air Force (USAF) reacted more slowly than the United States Navy (USN) to the difficulties in the skies over North Vietnam. A USAF Fighter Weapons School already existed, but it was slow to adapt to the new challenges. Dissimilar air combat training (ie flying against smaller and more MiG-like aircraft, rather than just other fighters of the same type) started in the early 1970s.

In 1975, the USAF took the concept a step further: Exercise Red Flag. The event was held with aircraft from the USAF, USN and US Marine Corps. Flying across 12,000 square miles of Nevada, the exercise included a full range of air-to-air and ground-to-air threats, allowing a realistically warlike experience to be simulated. Over time, the size of the exercise has grown, and now includes a complete array of air operations including airborne command and control, reconnaissance, ground attack, air-to-air refuelling, aerial superiority training, air assault and drones. Large-scale strike packages mount simulated attacks on complete enemy integrated air defence systems manned by personnel trained and versed in the tactics and doctrine of likely real-life opponents.

Since the late 1970s, allied nations have been invited to take part in Red Flag, not only providing valuable experience to their crews but also greatly improving integration and understanding between the different air forces. Sorties are planned as well as conducted together, and this has allowed extensive joint operations experience to be built up across the different US forces and with the friendly nations. Air power historian Richard P Hallion writes in his *Storm Over Iraq* that Red Flag “constitutes the finest and most sophisticated military training in the world”. The exercises were of immeasurable aid when US and Coalition forces were deployed to the Gulf to counter the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990. The experience of planning, flying and mock-fighting together in the skies over Nevada was instrumental when the Coalition to put together its devastating joint air offensive that was unleashed on the Iraqi forces in early 1991.

The Royal Air Force has participated in Red Flag since 1977, when Hawker Siddeley Buccaneers and Avro Vulcan bombers were sent to practise evading enemy air defences. While the UK provided excellent training areas for many types of operations, in Nevada aircraft could take advantage of the open spaces to practise extreme low-level operations, learning to literally fly lower than the enemy air defences could operate. Sorties were realistic and therefore dangerous: an RAF Buccaneer was lost on Red Flag in 1980, with both of the crew killed.

Today, Red Flag is conducted four to six times a year and is interspersed with similar exercises inspired by Red Flag’s example. Red Flag Alaska takes place over snow fields rather than deserts, and Maple Flag is held annually by the Royal Canadian Air Force with other invited air forces. The Turkish Air Force conducts occasional Anatolian Eagle exercises on the same model, including international contributions, and even the People’s Liberation Army Air Force in China has recently begun to hold similar events.

Vietnam had been suspended in 1968, and over the following few years relatively little air-to-air combat had taken place. However, in March 1970 Top Gun graduate Jerry Beaulier shot down a North Vietnamese MiG-21, the first US air-to-air victory in 18 months. More were to come. With the resumption of the bombing campaign in the North with Operation Linebacker in 1972, the rate of combat rose. So too did the USN kill ratio, growing from 2.4-to-one in 1968 to 12.5-to-one in 1973. In other words, US Navy pilots were now shooting down enemy aircraft at a rate five times higher than before Top Gun. USAF crews, meanwhile, retained a kill ratio of just over two-to-one. Top Gun historian Brad Elward writes: "For Top Gun and anyone who was paying attention, the kill ratio results of 1972 and early 1973 were the icing on the cake. Top Gun's tactics worked, as did the concept of developing its graduates to become the squadrons' training officers."

## Taking the advantage

Top Gun also enjoyed the fruits of a separate series of US programmes based around the exploitation of acquired Soviet fighters – their real-life adversaries. In 1968 the Israeli Air Force provided the US with a MiG-21 that had been handed to them by an Iraqi defector. Under the title Project Have Doughnut, the aircraft was extensively tested and flown against US types. Shortly afterwards, the Israelis were also able to provide two MiG-17s, which had landed in their territory after their Syrian pilots became lost, and which were flown under Projects Have Drill and Have Ferry. These were the principal types used by the North Vietnamese, and the ability for pupils to be able to review detailed intelligence on and evaluations of their actual adversaries was invaluable.

> "NAVY PILOTS WERE NOW SHOOTING DOWN ENEMY AIRCRAFT AT A RATE FIVE TIMES HIGHER THAN BEFORE TOP GUN"

Later, MiG-23s were also acquired, and a whole programme established by the USAF. Under the codename Constant Peg, the Soviet aircraft were evaluated by USAF and USN pilots of the 4477th Test and Evaluation Squadron. From 1976 they provided aggressors to fly against Top Gun pupils. Greater realism was added on occasion by not telling the students what type of aircraft they were going to encounter; they would simply be attacked by MiGs and the extra 'shock value' would be added to the training and assessments.

## Top Gun today

The United States Navy Fighter Weapons School had a proven effect on air combat over Vietnam, and after the war the programme continued to thrive. The school came to public fame and glamour with the release of the 1986 movie *Top Gun*, which while not entirely accurate in the details at least captured the essential motivation of the school. The 1990s brought change as the Cold War ended and a new age of uncertainty followed. Tactics, technology and potential enemies all changed, and the school changed with them. In the mid-1990s the school was renamed the Strike Fighter Tactics Instructor programme, reflecting the training role of its graduates, and also began to teach air-to-ground tactics.

Today it's part of the Naval Aviation Warfighting Development Centre and operates the very latest types, F-35s, to maintain their edge. Brad Elward concludes that: "Top Gun's impact on naval aviation has been amazing and, if you ask any of its founders, is something beyond their wildest dreams. When the school was founded in late 1968 its sole focus was to train fighter crews in core air combat tactics so as to pass those teachings on to the fleet and correct the dismal kill ratio the Navy F-4 community was experiencing in Vietnam. Top Gun did that and more, going on to become world renowned as a centre of excellence and home of some of the world's best fighter pilots and tacticians."

### FURTHER READING

- *The Tonkin Gulf Yacht Club* by Thomas McKelvey Cleaver
- *Top Gun: The Legacy* by Brad Elward

Image: Wiki / PD / Gov

*A range of Top Gun aircraft in close formation, 1991. A variety of paint schemes are used to simulate potential enemies*

AIRFIX
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# TIGER I
# SHERMAN FIREFLY VC

**1:72 A50186**

The mighty clash of armour which followed the successful Allied landings on the D-Day beaches of Normandy held the potential to determine the outcome of the war. This time, the dominance of the feared Tiger 1 would be challenged by rocket firing Typhoons from the air and a recently introduced Allied tank on the ground - although appearing outwardly similar to the standard Sherman at first glance, the 17-pounder anti-tank gun mounted on the 'Firefly' was more than capable of knocking out a Tiger. The Germans soon learned to look for the long barrelled Shermans first in any engagement and to make the Firefly a priority target, however, there were so many Shermans in Normandy that misidentification was highly likely and could prove fatal. The days of the mighty Tiger's dominance may have been numbered, but no Allied tank commander would relish the prospect of facing one in combat.

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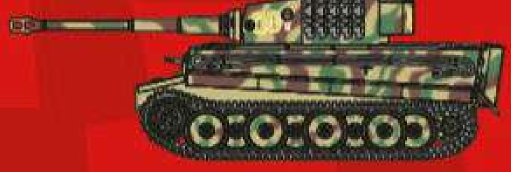
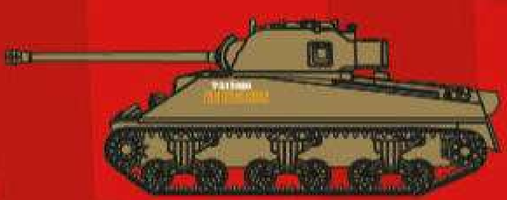
1:72 TIGER I SHERMAN FIREFLY Vc



PZKPFW TIGER 1 AUSF E
Commanded by Michael Wittmann, schwere Panzer-Abteilung 101, Normandy, France, 1944.
Length 118mm Width 53mm Pieces 96



SHERMAN FIREFLY VC
Staffordshire Yeomanry, 27th Armoured Brigade, Operation Goodwood, Normandy, France, June 1944.
Length 110mm Width 37mm Pieces 88

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# BATAAN DEATH MARCH

After Japan conquered the Philippines in WWII, its army inflicted one of the war's worst atrocities on Allied POWs

WORDS **MIGUEL MIRANDA**

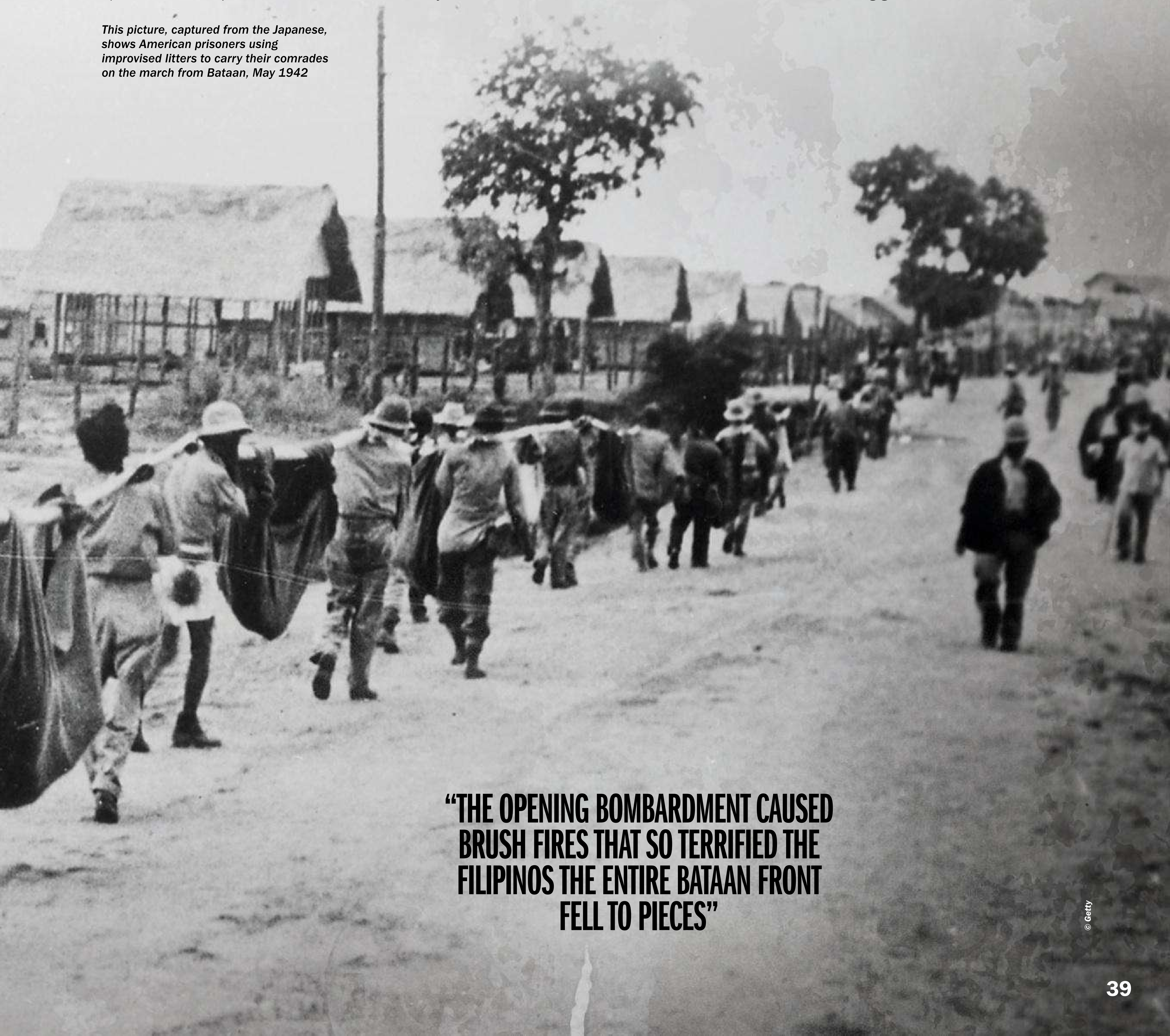
Four terrible months of combat and privation left the defeated sick with misery. Their commanders lied to them by insisting help would arrive, but it never did. These were the Americans and Filipinos who used to be part of the United States Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE), and they once boasted airfields crowded with planes, intimidating tank columns, and loyal if poorly trained conscripts who always followed orders. It was an overseas army trained and led by Americans but committed to defending the Philippine Commonwealth. But the USAFFE failed to halt the Japanese invasion of Luzon from 8 December onward.

In a last bid to hold out against the enemy General Douglas MacArthur, long past his prime and emotionally invested in the Philippines, ordered the initiation of War Plan Orange (WPO-3), which meant a phased retreat to the Bataan Peninsula that guarded the entrance to Manila Bay. The capital Manila was declared an "open city" to spare its population from siege. Instead, the Japanese 14th Army under Lieutenant General Masaharu Homma routed the Allies in Central Luzon and took Manila with ease. Come the new year the 14th Army concentrated its efforts on Bataan, where around 80,000 Allied troops were now trapped. In its plans to hold out until reinforcements from Australia and Hawaii arrived the Bataan landmass was split into two sectors, each held by a corps-sized formation. General Edward P King was on the ground organising layers of defences that repulsed Japanese attacks on land and sea until March.

The struggle for Bataan was bitter yet futile, although it did inspire wonderful Allied propaganda around the "Battling Bastards" fighting tooth and nail against the Japanese horde. Eventually, supplies of canned meat and juice, then ammunition and medicine, dwindled. Disease spread among the Americans because of foul drinking water, spreading tropical dysentery that roiled their bowels. On 3 April the Japanese Army, beefed up with fresh divisions from mainland China, the Dutch East Indies and Malaya, launched an attack by air and land. The opening bombardment caused brush fires that so terrified the Filipinos the entire Bataan front fell to pieces. Days later, unnerved by orders he should launch a counter-offensive with nonexistent formations, General King met with the Japanese and set terms of surrender.

In hindsight he had no choice. The men and women under him did not have large enough ships to escape Bataan by sea, although a few thousand reached the nearby island fortress of Corregidor where General Wainwright's headquarters still held on. General MacArthur and his staff had escaped in March. The island fortress was a strange place: much of its arsenal of gigantic howitzers and mortars

*This picture, captured from the Japanese, shows American prisoners using improvised litters to carry their comrades on the march from Bataan, May 1942*



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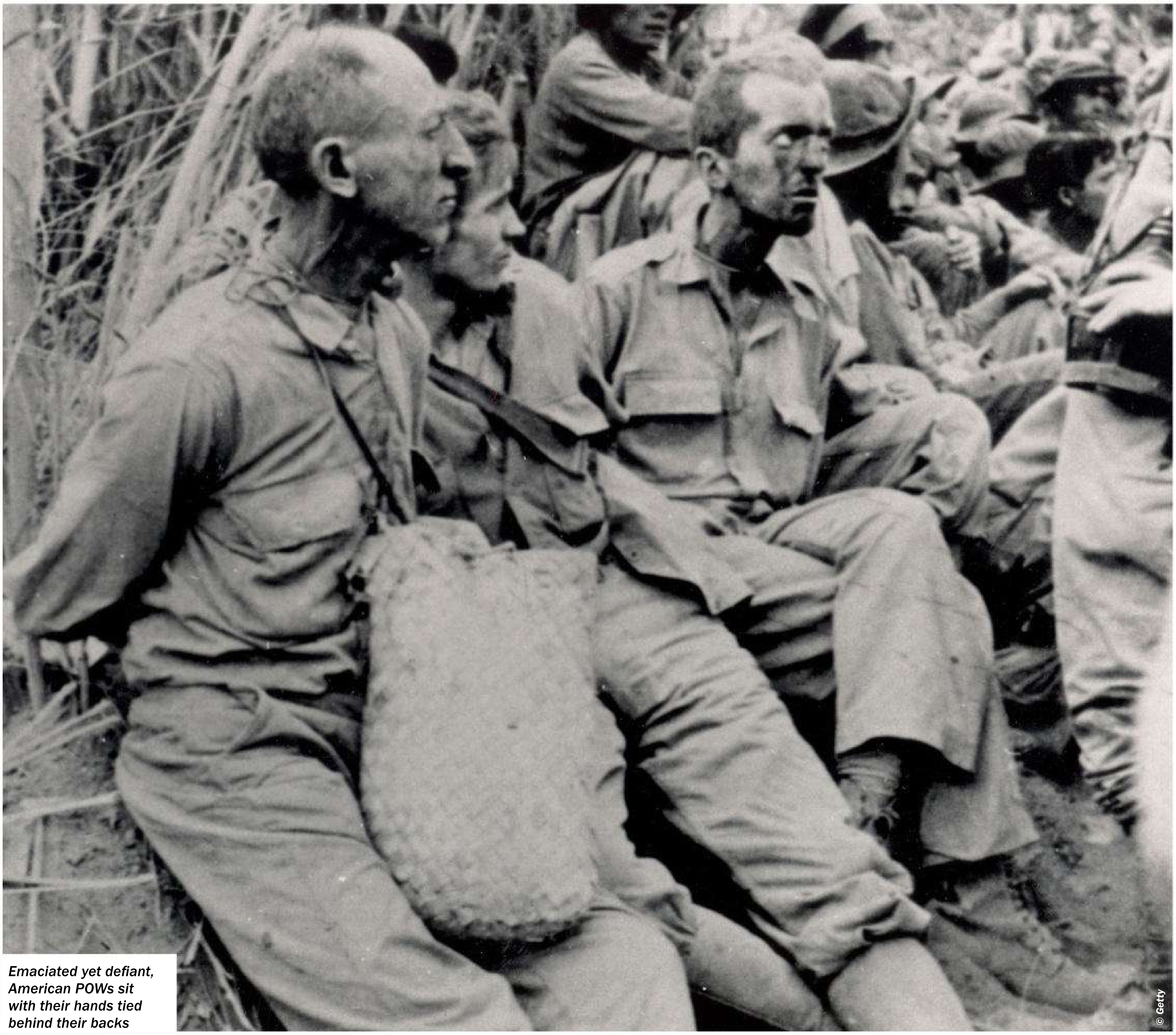
"THE OPENING BOMBARDMENT CAUSED BRUSH FIRES THAT SO TERRIFIED THE FILIPINOS THE ENTIRE BATAAN FRONT FELL TO PIECES" were obsolete by the 1940s and Japanese air superiority pushed the inhabitants deep into the Malinta tunnel complex dug from sheer rock. In some aspects Corregidor was more absurd than France's ineffective Maginot Line. The siege of the island from January until April was best captured by Elizabeth Norman's book *We Band of Angels,* about the US Army nurses left behind in the Philippines: "The face of Corregidor, once almost gardenlike, a kind of military resort with flowers and lawns and clubs and pools… was now a wasteland, denuded of its natural beauty, reduced to gray rubble and piles of dust in the crosshairs of a hundred thundering cannon."

Meanwhile, in Bataan the Allied troops' morale ebbed as they scuttled their heavy weapons. The Japanese conditions for the surrender of the Americans and Filipinos en masse were far from inhumane. The Allies even got away with sabotaging motor transport and fuel – ignited and blown up – lest these fell into Japanese hands.

## From the Battling Bastards to human chattel

Unfortunately for General King and his staff, little did they know how contemptuous and exacting the Japanese Army became when dealing with the vanquished. On 7 April an immense mustering took place in the foothills of the Bataan Peninsula's dormant volcanoes long overgrown by wilderness. The Japanese moved freely as they collected the surrendered. All in all, 20,000 Americans and 50,000 Filipino prisoners of war were accounted for, but the total varies from 70,000 to as many as 78,000. As many as a quarter of them would perish in the following two weeks. A month later another 12,000 Americans marched into captivity after Corregidor surrendered – this was the largest internment of American forces in wartime. By comparison, during the entire duration of the United States' commitment in the Vietnam War (1965-73) fewer than 800 prisoners were taken captive by the North Vietnamese. In 1942 almost 100,000 Americans – soldiers, civilians, women and children – endured Japanese captivity in varying circumstances. To better grasp what happened to the Bataan POWs, the resulting deaths rivalled the approximate 20,000 Poles executed in the Katyn Forest by the Soviets in 1940, but greatly exceeded the several thousand British POWs killed after they were transferred to the work camps of Burma.

The movement of POWs from the Bataan Peninsula to the Central Luzon plain, where Camp O'Donnell was located along with the secondary internment area Camp Cabanatuan, began on 9 April. The majority of the prisoners were still able-bodied but the addition of so many walking wounded, the sick and the diseased, would portend the difficulties to come. The Japanese Army, always burdened by a lack of motor transport, did not spare the trucks needed to move the POWs. The nearest railway depot, in San Fernando, was at least 50km away from Mariveles, which was the tip of the Bataan Peninsula.



***Emaciated yet defiant, American POWs sit with their hands tied behind their backs***

© Getty

Even in the 1940s the Philippines was renowned all over the world for its tropical splendour and laid-back charm, but these are attributes for times of peace. After the months of warm days and chilly evenings, March's relentless heat stifles every part of the country. In April 1942 this heat was compounded by mud and dust as columns of POWs began their trek toward the railway in what became known as the Bataan Death March. To envision the setting it's useful to recall the landscapes illustrated by the Filipino painter Fernando Amorsolo. On the dirt roads surrounded by lush rice fields and shallow streams, a provincial idyll ringed by dense forests and emerald hills, a torturous exodus tested the resolve of thousands of ailing POWs.

## Hell on Earth, in the Philippines

The Bataan Death March began on 9 April and lasted for around five to ten days, depending on where prisoners started from. The American POWs were exhausted by the time they left their former stronghold. Not surprisingly, the Filipinos managed a little better under their Japanese captors although they were not spared scorn and punishment. Many of them had been raised in the countryside, the bukid and the palayan, and when hunger cast its ugly spell they knew how to forage fruit and edible leaves, sometimes with the consent of their Japanese guards. American POWs had the opposite experience. Once they were in captivity these tired soldiers went through a hard day's march with just muddy water for sustenance. In the words of Colonel Ernest Miller: "Some of the men had reached a state of mind bordering insanity, from the lack of water. In desperation they would scoop it up from stagnant pools in the road ditches… a stagnant pool is virtually alive with dysentery germs."

> **"SOME OF THE MEN HAD REACHED A STATE OF MIND BORDERING INSANITY, FROM THE LACK OF WATER. IN DESPERATION THEY WOULD SCOOP IT UP FROM STAGNANT POOLS IN THE ROAD DITCHES…"**

It only got worse. When they reached the San Fernando railway terminal the Americans had to endure a fresh ordeal that, in a bitter twist of irony, had its roots in the US colonial occupation at the turn of the century. In 1898 the United States began its annexation of the Philippines and had soon colonised the entire archipelago. The American colonial economy centred around exporting agricultural commodities such as fibres, sugar, tobacco and tropical fruits, and they built railways in many

*Allied soldiers take cover in a trench during the fighting in Bataan*

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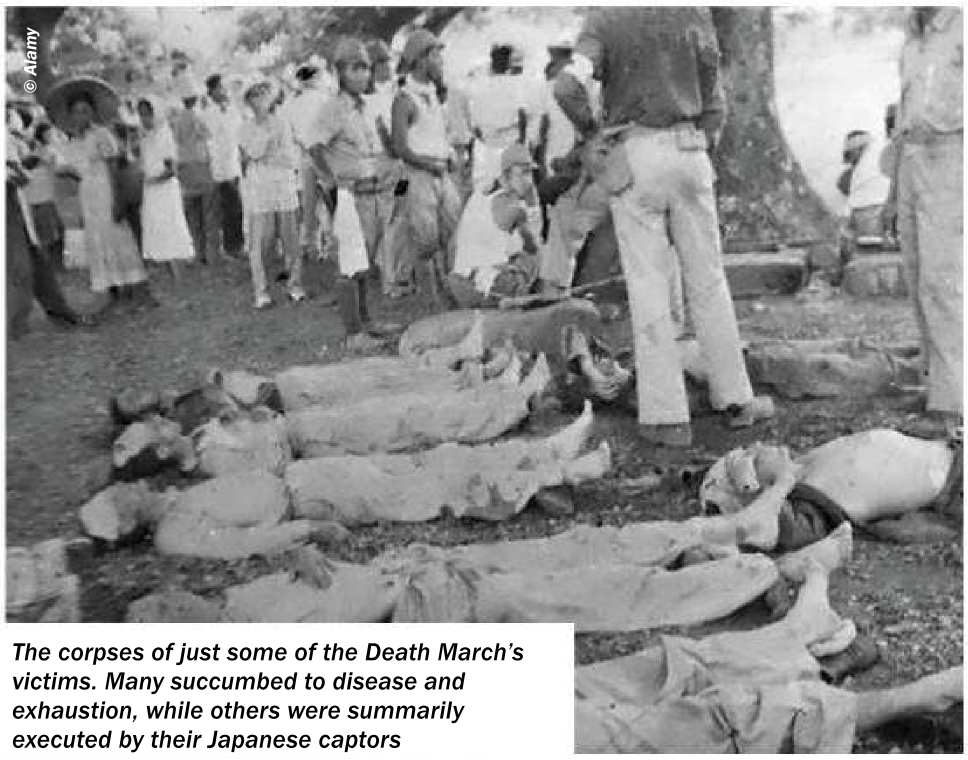

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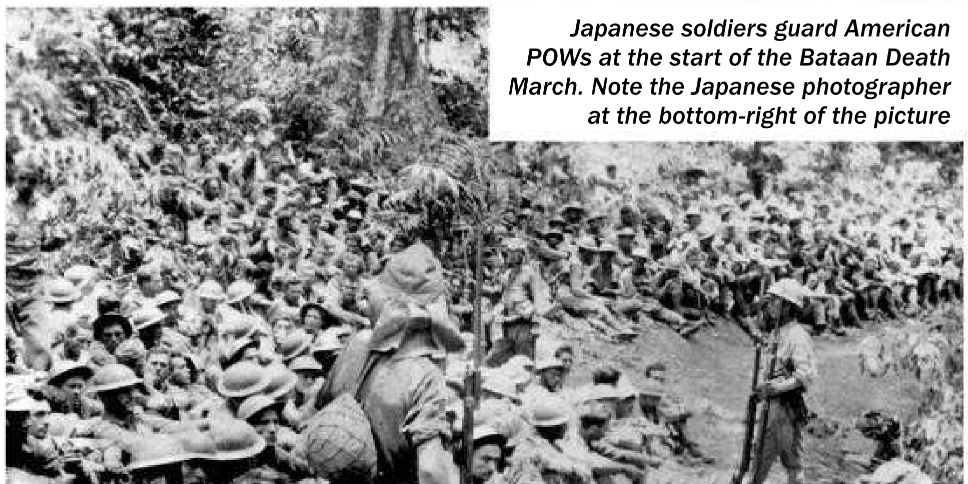
*The corpses of just some of the Death March's victims. Many succumbed to disease and exhaustion, while others were summarily executed by their Japanese captors*



*Japanese soldiers guard American POWs at the start of the Bataan Death March. Note the Japanese photographer at the bottom-right of the picture*

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*The American surrender at Bataan in April 1942 was the second-biggest defeat suffered by the Allies in Asia after the fall of Singapore in January, where 130,000 prisoners were taken*

© Getty

*American POWs are allowed a moment's rest before resuming their journey on foot. All the Americans pictured here are malnourished and dehydrated, and least 1 in 4 of the POWs died from sickness*

*Prisoners who survived the forced march were shipped to Japan and put to work in brutal labour camps*

© Alamy

outlying provinces to ferry these commodities for processing and then shipment. Now the victorious Japanese Army, brutal almost beyond comprehension, packed the surviving POWs into the railway's unventilated boxcars and let them suffer heat stroke on the three-hour journey north to Camp O'Donnell.

One of the most detailed accounts comes from Colonel Miller, who survived captivity in the Philippines and Japan. He never forgot the casual brutality that the Japanese captors unleashed on the Americans. When it came to instilling fear among their prisoners the Japanese were especially depraved. "It was along this particular stretch of road that we saw something which was most horrible to behold," Miller recalled. "It was a body held semi-upright with barbed wire. The body had been a Filipino soldier. The abdomen had been slashed open and the bowels ripped therefrom and hung on the wire."

For the youthful Corporal James Bollich, previously of the Far East Air Force, surviving the Japanese guards was a matter of luck. When another prisoner was caught with an empty water bottle the punishment was abysmal. "They beat him over the head with the bottle until it broke and kept on beating him with the broken glass. I don't know if he survived," Bollich wrote in his memoir.

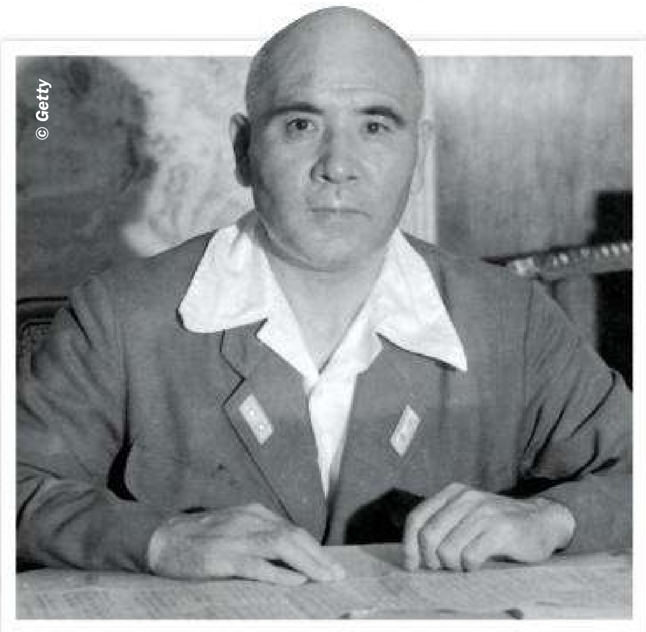
## Dropping like flies

There was no respite for those who made it to Camp O'Donnell. Kept in their former barracks now crammed with exhausted POWs, the nonexistent sanitation caused disease to engulf the prisoners. "Dysentery spread… because of the open latrines and the millions of flies around them," Bollich wrote. "Sick men were also covered [in flies], especially those near the latrine, because the latrine itself held the greatest number. It's no wonder, under these conditions, that so many of the prisoners died."

Those who did not perish from disease or exhaustion managed to survive on lugaw. Decades later, countless Americans who served in the Philippines swore by this crude sustenance as a life-saver. Lugaw, in its basic form, is rice porridge and a wonderful source of carbohydrates and some nutrition if meat and vegetables are added (Filipino lugaw is often served to infants). For American POWs in the Philippines, as well as the lucky few who evaded the Japanese and became guerrillas, the worst lugaw made with subpar rice filled their bellies through many lean months.

Another eyewitness to the atrocities of the Bataan Death March was the American spy Claire Phillips, whose husband perished in Bataan. Barely recovering from malaria while in hiding, a tearful Phillips watched the POWs through field glasses and later tried organising burial parties for the corpses left behind. She witnessed the Japanese execute POWs for the slightest infraction. "Occasionally a man would drop and then one of his little tormentors would run a bayonet through him and kick his body down the road," she wrote in her memoir. Her account matches the testimonies of other survivors who saw executions and murders by Japanese soldiers up close.

"OCCASIONALLY A MAN WOULD DROP AND THEN ONE OF HIS LITTLE TORMENTORS WOULD RUN A BAYONET THROUGH HIM AND KICK HIS BODY DOWN THE ROAD"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***Above:** Lieutenant General Masaharu Homma led the invasion of the Philippines and secured total victory in four months. His troops then arranged the Bataan Death March. Homma was executed by the US Army in 1946*

It's estimated that between 20,000 to 24,000 POWs died in captivity along with an unspecified number of civilians – even the locals risked death by execution if they tried to help the suffering Americans. It's important to acknowledge more Filipinos were killed in the march, always at the hands of Japanese, than American POWs, and this explains the catastrophic death toll. By the summer of 1942 Filipino POWs were granted a form of amnesty as long as they joined the local police force under Japanese leadership.

For the American survivors of Bataan their ordeal never ended. Beginning in July the POWs who'd survived the illness and starvation were sent to Japan aboard 'hell ships'. These were merchant vessels repurposed to transport human chattel. It took five days for one ship, loaded with several hundred POWs, to sail from Manila to Japan. A meagre food ration and a single cup of water was supplied to each American. Their physical condition deteriorated further, but awaiting them in Japan were the pitiless labour camps, where they toiled for years until liberation.

Having sworn to avenge their loss in 1942, General MacArthur and the US Army began their reconquest of the Philippines in October 1944. In the ensuing five months the Japanese were either wiped out or routed from island after island, and as many as 4,000 Allied prisoners were rescued in places such as the University of Santo Tomas and the Manila City Jail. The US Army organised its own war crimes trials in late 1945, and General Homma was prosecuted and sentenced to death by firing squad, which was carried out on 3 April 1946. In the eyes of his judges, his downfall was sealed by the thousands who perished in the Bataan Death March.

Today the Philippines reserves 9 April as a special holiday – Araw ng Kagitingan or Day of Valor – to remember those who perished in Bataan and Corregidor. Since 1989 active service members of the US military and volunteers have participated in the annual Bataan Memorial Death March at the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico. The marathon attracts thousands of participants each year, who brave a 40km hike over rugged desert terrain. Surviving POWs have been known to participate into their 90s and beyond.

bataan
march 25, 2018
© Alamy

*100-year-old Bataan Death March survivor Colonel Ben Skardon, a Clemson University alumnus and professor emeritus, crosses the 8.5-mile finish line of the Bataan Memorial Death March at White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico, 25 March 2018*

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“AMONG THE COMRADES SAVED WAS MAJOR JAMES RUTHERFORD LUMLEY, WHOSE NOT-YET-BORN DAUGHTER WOULD HAVE A SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE ON PUN’S LATER LIFE”

*Tul Bahadur Pun pictured at the Royal Military School of Music in Twickenham, London, 21 September 2007*

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Heroes of the Victoria Cross

# TUL BAHADUR PUN

## In June 1944, as Allied forces began re-establishing dominance in Burma, a Gurkha Chindit stormed Japanese positions on a railway bridge to save his comrades, earning him the British Empire's highest military honour

WORDS **ALEX BOWERS**

The men of the 3rd Battalion, 6th Gurkha Rifles, watched in dismay as Acting Captain Michael Allmand, a respected company commander who had proven his courage in previous engagements, crawled ahead of his unit towards the Japanese machine gun nest. Wading through mud and shell holes, he seemed unstoppable – until a burst of fire struck him down, a wound that would ultimately prove fatal. The enemy bullets continued to tear into the dwindling Chindit forces from across the rail bridge in the Burmese town of Mogaung. A war hero had fallen and, unknown to those who had witnessed it, a posthumous Victoria Cross recipient had risen. But Michael Allmand VC wouldn't be the only recipient of Britain's highest military honour that day – 23 June 1944 – Gurkha rifleman Tul Bahadur Pun was about to showcase his bravery and fighting prowess too.

Like so many from the hill villages of Western Nepal, Tul Bahadur Pun enlisted to serve a king and country almost 8,000km away. His training took place at Abbottabad in Northern India (present-day Pakistan), whereby he became part of the 3rd Battalion, 6th Gurkha Rifles in the 77th Infantry Brigade commanded by Brigadier Mike Calvert. These servicemen would experience the horrors of the South-East Asian Theatre in the years to come. What had begun with a series of swift and brutal actions carried out by the Japanese, perhaps most infamously the attack on Pearl Harbor and the Battle of Hong Kong, was followed by an invasion of Burma in December 1941. The enemy advanced from Axis-occupied Thailand, captured Rangoon, cut off the Burma Road – depriving the Nationalist Chinese armies of essential supplies – and pushed some 1,600km further to place themselves at the gates of British India.

By May 1942, not only had the British lost their Burmese stronghold to a blitzkrieg but they had also effectively surrendered the country's rich resources and, worse still, the Japanese were well-positioned to help incite an Indian insurrection against the British Raj – at least in the minds of British high command. Something needed to be done, and soon, yet the ensuing months saw little more than a stalemate as both sides attempted to probe each other's strengths and weaknesses across the border. The first counter-attack against the Japanese was in the southwestern Burmese region of Arakan, ending in a humiliating failure with terrible losses. Morale sank to an all-time low. However, in 1943 good news arrived that the first Chindit expedition, called Operation Longcloth, involving men of the 77th Infantry Brigade, had been largely successful in its recent use of guerrilla tactics. This now tried-and-tested method of disrupting enemy supply lines and harassing enemy soldiers proved that the Allied troops could take the fight against the Japanese deep into the jungle.

The Chindits' greatest test would come the next year when the Allies' luck was on the cusp of changing for the better. The infamous Battles of Kohima and Imphal loomed as the Japanese advance on India, dubbed Operation U-Go, gathered momentum. But the Allies had a plan of their own: in February 1944 the 77th Infantry Brigade and the rest of the second Chindit expedition, under the unconventional Major-General Orde Wingate, successfully infiltrated the Japanese lines during Operation Thursday. Their task was to put pressure on the enemy at the same time as advancing towards the town

© Getty

***Left:** Major-General Orde Wingate's Chindits travelling through the jungle with their mules* of Mogaung. But appalling weather conditions, the declining health of soldiers riddled with disease and fierce fighting over several weeks hampered efforts considerably. At the end of May 1944 the 77th Infantry Brigade, the 3/6GR among its ranks, was ordered to capture the town itself, which was thought to be held by around 4,000 Japanese personnel.

The coming days saw the Allied ranks swell with Chinese forces, who would provide crucial artillery support. There were also the initial heroic feats of Allmand who, with the help of his men, seized the vital Pin Hmi road bridge and a nearby ridge, acts that would feature in his Victoria Cross citation. Nevertheless, the main obstacle of a heavily defended railway bridge remained. On 23 June, 1944, the battalion received orders to knock out its emplacements, notably the machine gun nest based in a brick building dubbed, somewhat ominously, the "Red House". It was here that the 20-year-old Allmand suffered his fatal wound. It was here too that the almost-as-young Tul Bahadur Pun took it upon himself to silence the enemy resistance once and for all.

With the 6th Gurkha Rifle's "B" Company pinned down and Pun's section all but wiped out, the Nepali Chindit reached for the only Bren light machine gun and stood. The Red House was in his sights as he charged forward, firing from the hip, across the 30 metres of muddy, cratered and debris-strewn open ground. The rising sun behind him silhouetted his figure, making him a perfect target for those firing at him, but he escaped unscathed. He soon made it to the Red House and, to the Japanese defenders' disbelief, he entered the building with his weapon at the ready. At least three Japanese soldiers were killed in the close combat that followed and a further five were reportedly put to flight. Pun glanced at the two light machine guns and vast quantities of ammunition he had just claimed. His unit, he could see, was still trapped. Not considering the potential dangers to his own life, alone on the Japanese lines, Pun proceeded to lay down supporting fire from his position to free the rest of his men. Among the comrades saved was Major James Rutherford Lumley, whose not-yet-born daughter, Joanna, would have a significant influence on his later life.

"PUN THEN SEIZED THE BREN GUN... FIRING FROM THE HIP AS HE WENT"

**Tal Bahadur Pun's VC citation**

But all that mattered in the moment was that due in large part to Pun's daring initiative the Chindits had achieved their objective, albeit at the cost of heavy casualties. Pun's actions that day undoubtedly deserved recognition, and his citation reads: "[Tul Bahadur Pun's] outstanding courage and superb gallantry in the face of odds… were most inspiring to all ranks and were beyond praise." Mogaung fell to the Allies on 27 June, several months after Pun received his Victoria Cross at a special parade held in Delhi. At the end of the Second World War, he continued with the 6th Gurkha Rifles, serving in Malaya and Hong Kong before retiring with the honorary rank of Lieutenant (QGO) on 14 May, 1959. The VC recipient subsequently returned to his Nepali village although, regrettably, his fighting days were not yet over.

Pun re-entered the public eye in the mid-2000s when his application to settle in Britain was refused because, according to the British authorities, the veteran failed to establish strong ties to the UK. The news was met with widespread outrage and protests, particularly after reports that Pun, at approximately 84 years old (Nepalese birth records from the time are often unreliable), was having to travel long

*British and Gurkha soldiers marching through Burma in March 1945, days after Pun received his Victoria Cross in India* distances, largely on foot or carried by Sherpas, to receive much-needed medical treatment and his monthly British Army pension. One of those who later fronted a campaign to ensure Gurkha rights in Britain was none other than actress Dame Joanna Lumley, whose father, Major Lumley, had been saved by Pun's bravery all those years before. The campaign greatly increased public awareness of Pun's situation – and that of many other Gurkha veterans – and the decision to deny his application was eventually overturned. In 2007, he arrived in London to a hero's welcome.

His success story was the start of a long and arduous fight to ensure that thousands of other Gurkha veterans, all of whom had retired prior to 1997 and had been denied UK residency, were able to reapply for British visas. His family, meanwhile, continued a fight of their own. In September 2010, in the thick of the Afghanistan War, Pun's grandson, Acting Sergeant Dipprasad Pun, was serving with the Royal Gurkha Rifles in Helmand Province when his isolated outpost came under attack by Taliban insurgents. One of only four men left in the compound while his platoon was on patrol, the 31-year-old single-handedly fended off the enemy, killing at least three assailants and forcing the others to flee. His outstanding performance of duty, like that of his grandfather some seven decades previously, saved the lives of his three comrades and prevented the position from being overrun. He received the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross as a result.

Tul Bahadur Pun, VC, passed away on 20 April, 2011, while on a visit to his village of Myagdi in Nepal. There are several memorials that honour him and, on June 23, 2021 (exactly 77 years after his actions at Mogaung) a Great Western Railway train was named after him. Dr Daren Bowyer, Director of The Gurkha Museum in Winchester, says of Pun's legacy: "The story of Tul Bahadur Pun, VC, is as inspiring as it is typical as an example of Gurkha resilience, heroism and self-sacrifice in Britain's service. His is one of 13 Victoria Crosses won by Gurkha soldiers and officers; a further 13 have been won by British officers serving in Gurkha units. Tul Bahadur's VC is displayed at the Gurkha Museum, appropriately alongside that of Captain Michael Allmand, VC."

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***Above, left:*** *Dame Joanna Lumley with Tul Bahadur Pun, VC (left) and Lachhiman Gurung, VC (right)*

***Above, right:*** *Sergeant Dipprasad Pun, CGC – grandson of Tul Bahadur Pun, VC – receives his Conspicuous Gallantry Cross from the Queen*

## GURKHA MUSEUM

**Research material sourced from The Gurkha Museum.**
**For more information, please visit The Gurkha Museum Trust, Peninsula Barracks, Romsey Road, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 8TS.**
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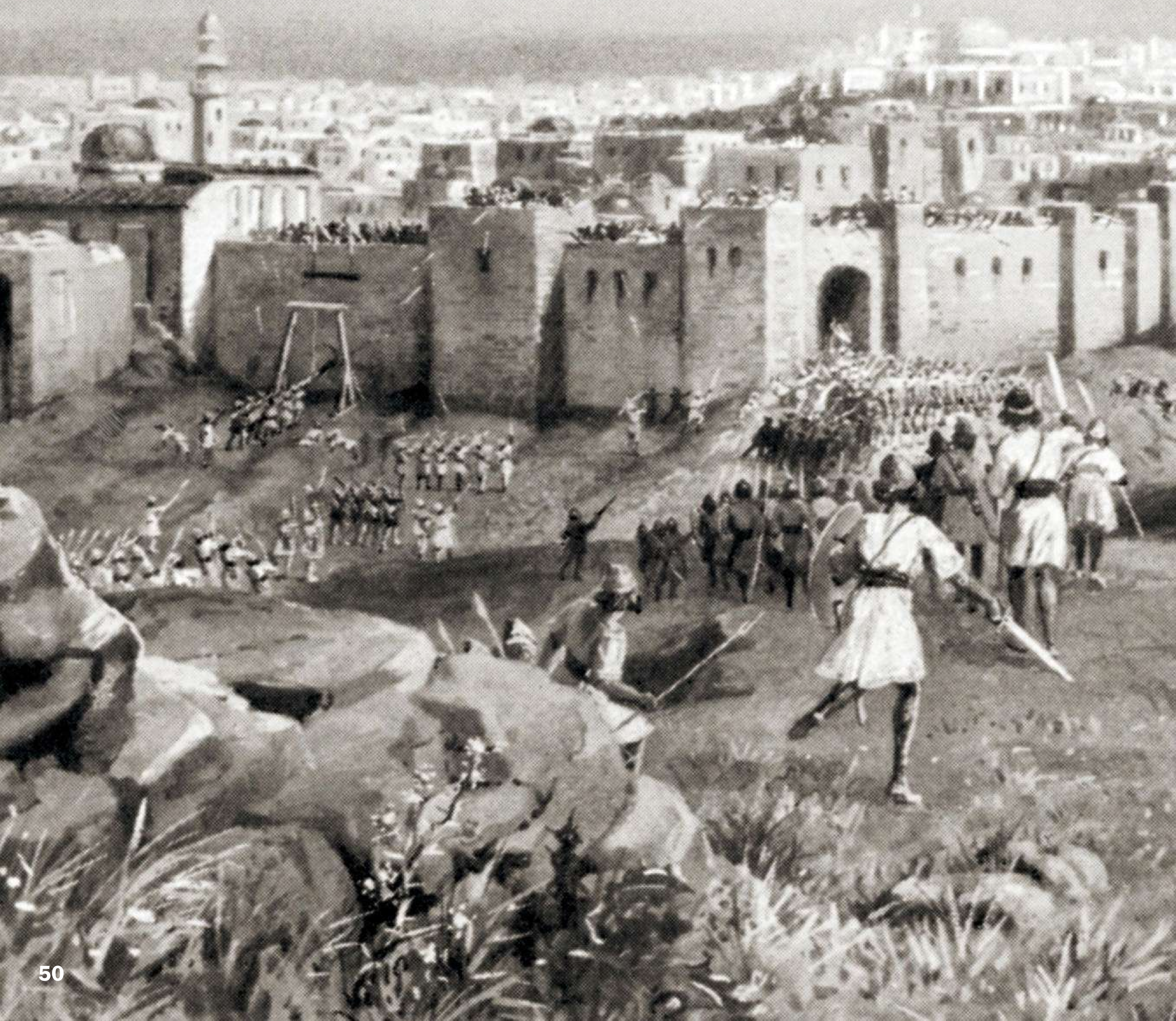
**IRAQ** MAY 633

# WALAJA

## The Sassanids suffer a crushing defeat at the hands of the Rashidun caliphate

WORDS **HARETH AL BUSTANI**



When Abu Bakr was elected the first caliph of the Muslim community in 632, he inherited a precarious realm. Though Muhammad had united the tribes of Arabia, after his momentous death many refused to recognise the leadership of his nominated successor, withdrawing from treaties, withholding taxes and some even embracing other prophets.

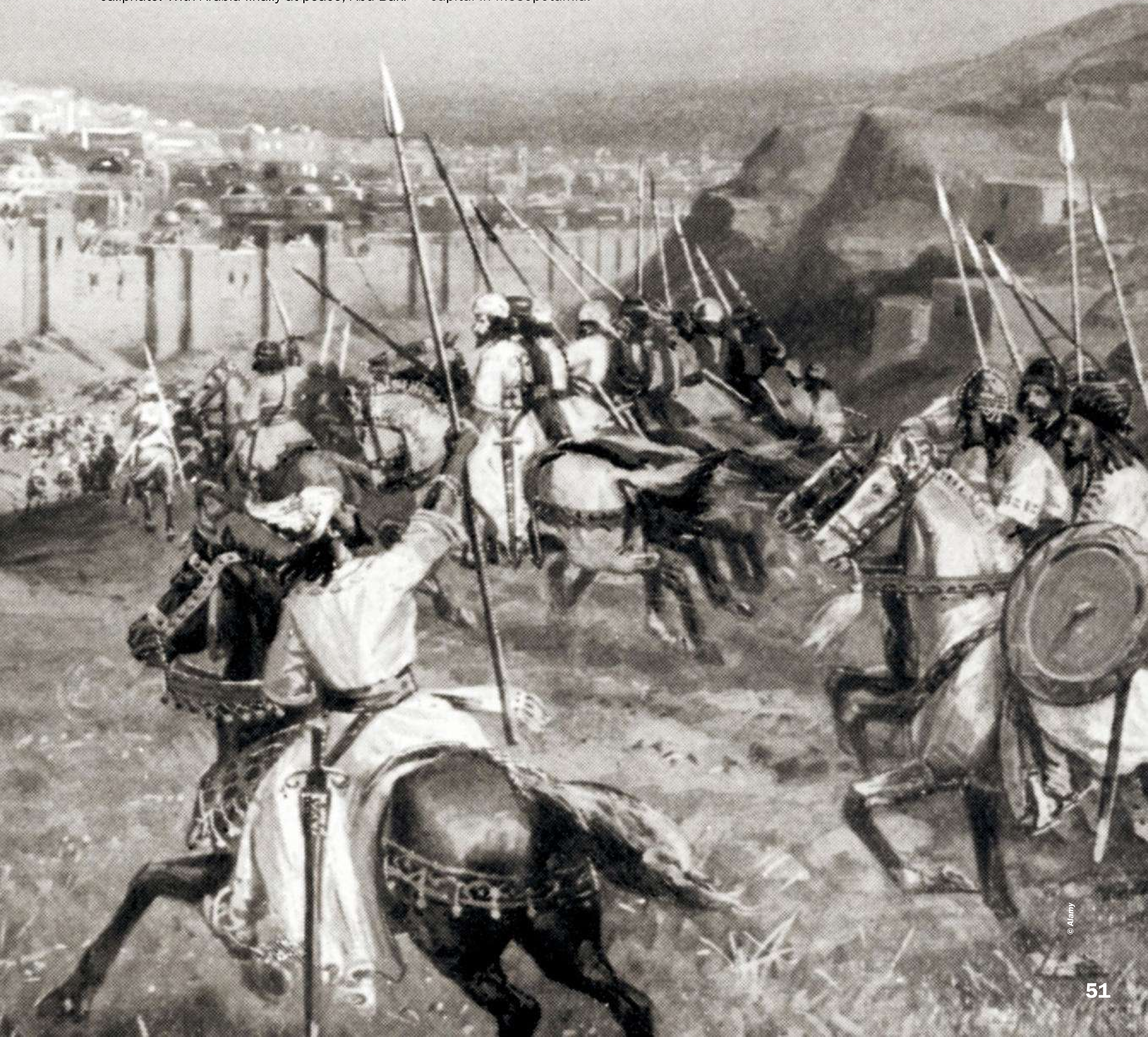
Abu Bakr wasted no time in putting 'apostate' rebels to the sword and by the following year all pockets of resistance had been decimated. This was thanks especially to the efforts of the ingenious general, Khalid ibn al-Waleed, who crushed the rebellious clans of the central region of Najd. The swift campaign was seen as a divine stamp of approval, formalising the emergent Rashidun, or 'Rightly Guided', caliphate. With Arabia finally at peace, Abu Bakr was anxious to direct the Bedouins' warlike disposition elsewhere. Now his gravest threats lay to the north, where he shared a border with the mighty Byzantine and Sassanid empires.

During the previous three decades, the Persian Sassanids and Roman Byzantines had exhausted one another fighting a gruelling war for supremacy, only to end in stalemate. The Persians had also smashed both the Ghassanids and the Lakhmids, Arab client kingdoms who had previously protected the southern reaches of both empires – the Byzantine Levant and Sassanid Mesopotamia. In the ensuing chaos, an ambitious Bedouin tribal leader began launching raids deep into Mesopotamia, revealing the Sassanids' vulnerability. Sensing the iron was hot, Abu Bakr ordered Khalid to march north and take the city of Al Hirah – the former Lakhmid capital in Mesopotamia.

## OPPOSING FORCES

| RASHIDUN CALIPHATE | VS | SASSANID EMPIRE |
|---|---|---|
| **LEADER**<br>Khalid ibn Al Waleed | | **LEADER**<br>Andarzaghar |
| **TROOPS**<br>10,000 | | **TROOPS**<br>18,000 |
| **CAVALRY**<br>5,000 | | **CAVALRY**<br>7,000 |

*The Sassanids boasted a wide range of well-equipped and heavily armoured units*



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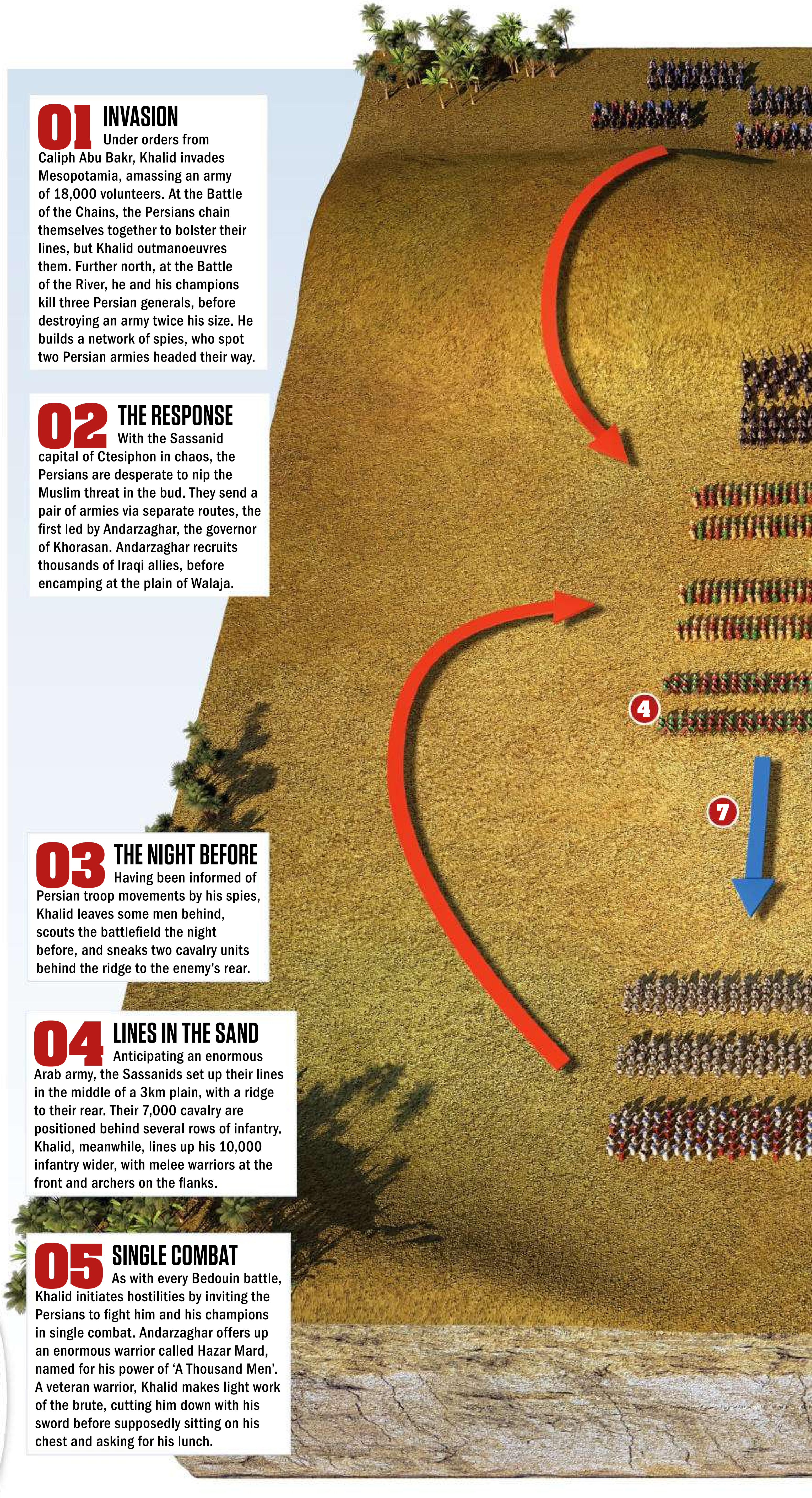
Though Khalid set out with 2,000 zealous soldiers, by the time he reached the border he had recruited 16,000 volunteers. Passions were running high and many were eager to spread the faith, or die trying. On the way, Khalid penned a letter to Hurmuz, a Persian governor near the border, which began: "Praise be to God, who has scattered your servants, wrested your sovereignty away and rendered your plotting weak." The letter demanded the Persians embrace Islam or bend the knee and pay tribute, otherwise: "I will most certainly send against you a people who love death just as you love life."

Hurmuz scoffed – even at their weakest the Sassanids boasted one of the most powerful, best-equipped armies in the world, with units ranging from slingers to war elephants. Their pride and joy – the heavy cavalry – were armed with exceptional bows, lances and melee weapons, and were clad in a coat of mail, full-faced aventail, breastplate and greaves. Even their horses were armoured. Hurmuz himself wore a jewel-studded conical cap – worth 100,000 dirhams – worn only by the most elite of nobles. No, he had no intention of backing away from a ragtag bunch of Bedouin raiders.

Despite considerable skill with the Roman-inspired short sword and long spears, pre-Islamic Bedouin armies were little more than armed mobs. Muhammad, however, had changed all that. A visionary military strategist, he learned from his mighty neighbours, replacing his javelins with the Sassanid-inspired Hijaz longbow – previously stigmatised as a coward's weapon. Under his leadership, the Arabs perfected a distinct brand of warfare, with armies spearheaded by an elite cavalry vanguard followed by an infantry core and two further cavalry wings. Horses were in such short supply the Muslims led them to battle on foot and used them only for crucial manoeuvres. They swelled their ranks with camels, aided by the invention of a wood-framed saddle that was secured atop the hump.

Meanwhile, the most important footsoldiers wore an Iraqi bronze teardrop helmet. Their bodies were protected by two mail hauberks,



### 01 INVASION

Under orders from Caliph Abu Bakr, Khalid invades Mesopotamia, amassing an army of 18,000 volunteers. At the Battle of the Chains, the Persians chain themselves together to bolster their lines, but Khalid outmanoeuvres them. Further north, at the Battle of the River, he and his champions kill three Persian generals, before destroying an army twice his size. He builds a network of spies, who spot two Persian armies headed their way.

### 02 THE RESPONSE

With the Sassanid capital of Ctesiphon in chaos, the Persians are desperate to nip the Muslim threat in the bud. They send a pair of armies via separate routes, the first led by Andarzaghar, the governor of Khorasan. Andarzaghar recruits thousands of Iraqi allies, before encamping at the plain of Walaja.

### 03 THE NIGHT BEFORE

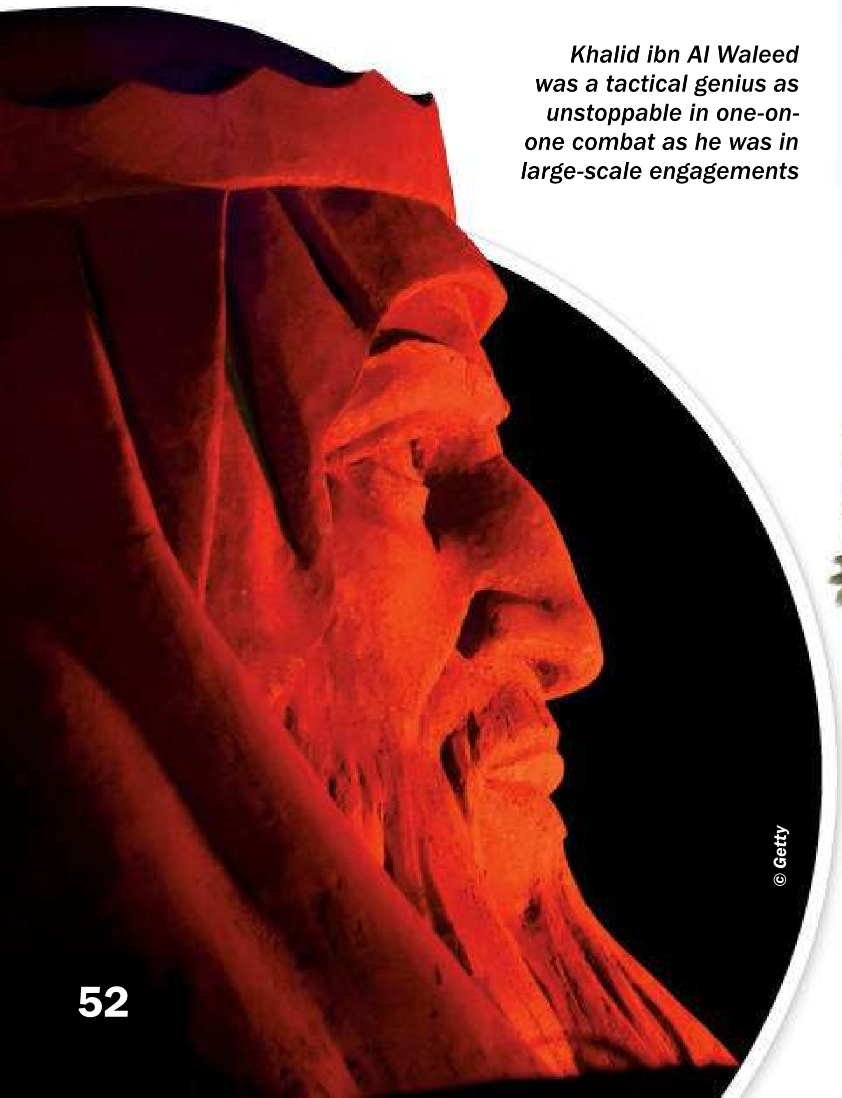
Having been informed of Persian troop movements by his spies, Khalid leaves some men behind, scouts the battlefield the night before, and sneaks two cavalry units behind the ridge to the enemy's rear.

### 04 LINES IN THE SAND

Anticipating an enormous Arab army, the Sassanids set up their lines in the middle of a 3km plain, with a ridge to their rear. Their 7,000 cavalry are positioned behind several rows of infantry. Khalid, meanwhile, lines up his 10,000 infantry wider, with melee warriors at the front and archers on the flanks.

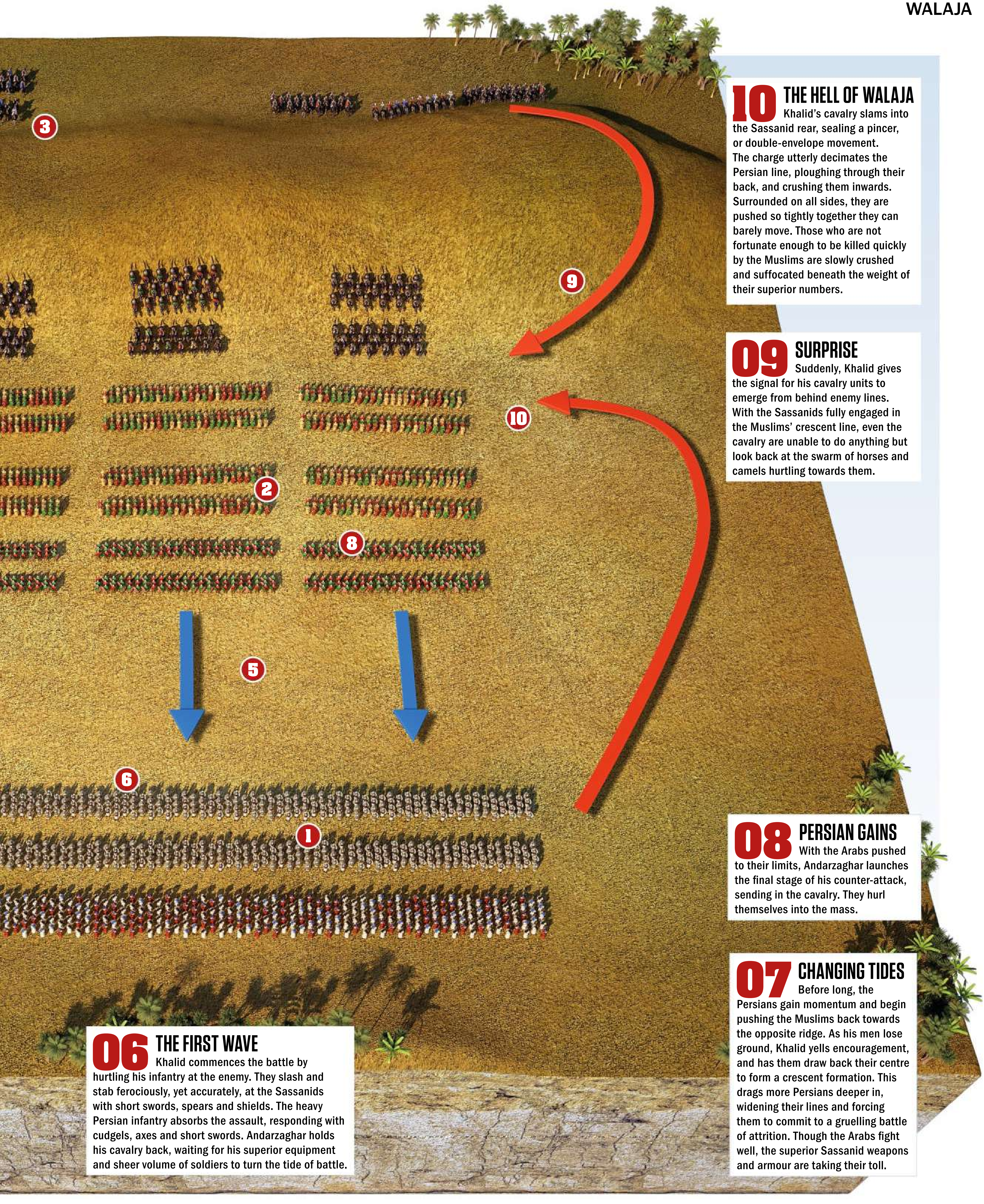
### 05 SINGLE COMBAT

As with every Bedouin battle, Khalid initiates hostilities by inviting the Persians to fight him and his champions in single combat. Andarzaghar offers up an enormous warrior called Hazar Mard, named for his power of 'A Thousand Men'. A veteran warrior, Khalid makes light work of the brute, cutting him down with his sword before supposedly sitting on his chest and asking for his lunch.



*Khalid ibn Al Waleed was a tactical genius as unstoppable in one-on-one combat as he was in large-scale engagements*

© Getty



## 06 THE FIRST WAVE

Khalid commences the battle by hurtling his infantry at the enemy. They slash and stab ferociously, yet accurately, at the Sassanids with short swords, spears and shields. The heavy Persian infantry absorbs the assault, responding with cudgels, axes and short swords. Andarzaghar holds his cavalry back, waiting for his superior equipment and sheer volume of soldiers to turn the tide of battle.

## 07 CHANGING TIDES

Before long, the Persians gain momentum and begin pushing the Muslims back towards the opposite ridge. As his men lose ground, Khalid yells encouragement, and has them draw back their centre to form a crescent formation. This drags more Persians deeper in, widening their lines and forcing them to commit to a gruelling battle of attrition. Though the Arabs fight well, the superior Sassanid weapons and armour are taking their toll.

## 08 PERSIAN GAINS

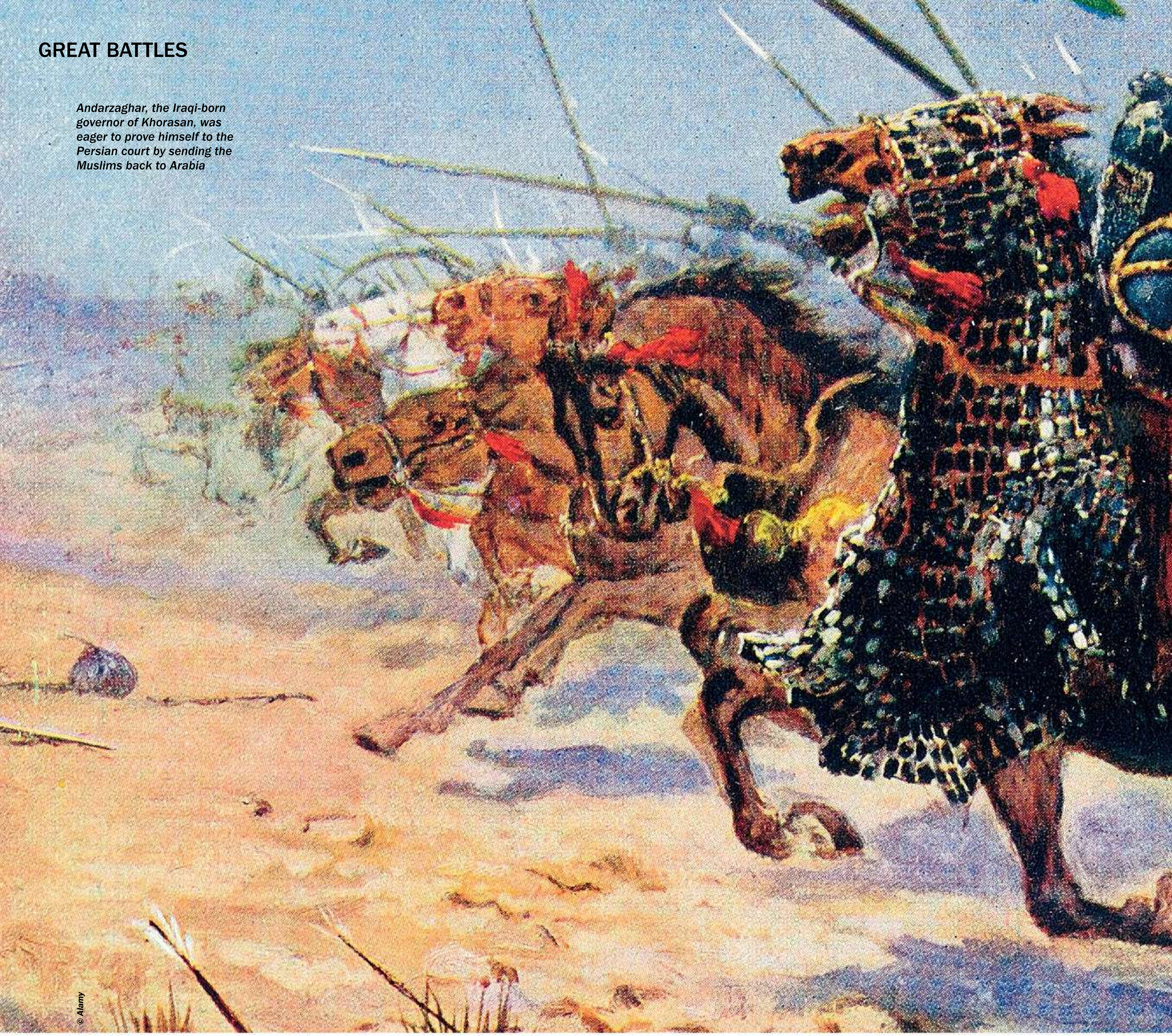
With the Arabs pushed to their limits, Andarzaghar launches the final stage of his counter-attack, sending in the cavalry. They hurl themselves into the mass.

## 09 SURPRISE

Suddenly, Khalid gives the signal for his cavalry units to emerge from behind enemy lines. With the Sassanids fully engaged in the Muslims' crescent line, even the cavalry are unable to do anything but look back at the swarm of horses and camels hurtling towards them.

## 10 THE HELL OF WALAJA

Khalid's cavalry slams into the Sassanid rear, sealing a pincer, or double-envelope movement. The charge utterly decimates the Persian line, ploughing through their back, and crushing them inwards. Surrounded on all sides, they are pushed so tightly together they can barely move. Those who are not fortunate enough to be killed quickly by the Muslims are slowly crushed and suffocated beneath the weight of their superior numbers.



*Andarzaghar, the Iraqi-born governor of Khorasan, was eager to prove himself to the Persian court by sending the Muslims back to Arabia*

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with a tunic between, swords hanging from a leather strap across the body. Others wore turbans, fighting with spears and shields, protecting archers, who kept the enemy cavalry at bay. This allowed the Arabs to use their favoured cavalry tactic of repeatedly attacking, retreating and counter-attacking.

Khalid's threatening letter, sent from central Saudi Arabia's Al Yamama, had not only telegraphed his intent, but seemingly his route. In April, Hurmuz hurried his men to Al Kazima, where he planned to intercept the invading army and roundly scatter them back to the Arabian desert. However, as the day ticked by, Khalid did not show up. Instead, a breathless scout alerted Hurmuz that the Muslims were heading further north. Panicked and enraged, Hurmuz marched his men there in double time. Khalid waited until they had travelled just far enough, and then turned back again to Al Kazima. By the time the heavily armoured Persians finally arrived in the right place, they were exhausted.

**"FOR THOSE NOT YET OVERCOME BY RELIGIOUS ZEAL, THE SIGHT OF SUCH RICHES WAS INCENTIVE ENOUGH TO FOLLOW KHALID – WHO MUHAMMAD HIMSELF HAD NICKNAMED 'SWORD OF ALLAH' – INTO BATTLE"**

Hurmuz linked his men together with chains, superficially as a show of force, but tactically to make it harder for the Muslims' agile cavalry to find gaps to break through. However, when Khalid's spirited cavalry outmanoeuvred and routed the Persians, those chained together were unable to escape, and hacked down en masse. Khalid, a warrior of the finest stock, killed Hurmuz himself in single combat – the fewer survivors he left to reinforce armies elsewhere, the better. The next day, he rounded up the spoils – armour, weapons, luxurious clothes, horses and captives – handing out four-fifths to his men. For those not yet overcome by religious zeal, the sight of such riches was incentive enough to follow Khalid – who Muhammad himself had nicknamed 'Sword of Allah' – into battle.

At the ensuing Battle of the River, before proceedings began, Khalid's champions killed

all three Persian generals in single combat, including two descendants of Ardashir the Great. He immediately seized on the ensuing chaos, frightening away an army twice his size. According to the controversial Sayf ibn Umar, more than 30,000 Persians were killed, alongside those who drowned in the Euphrates.

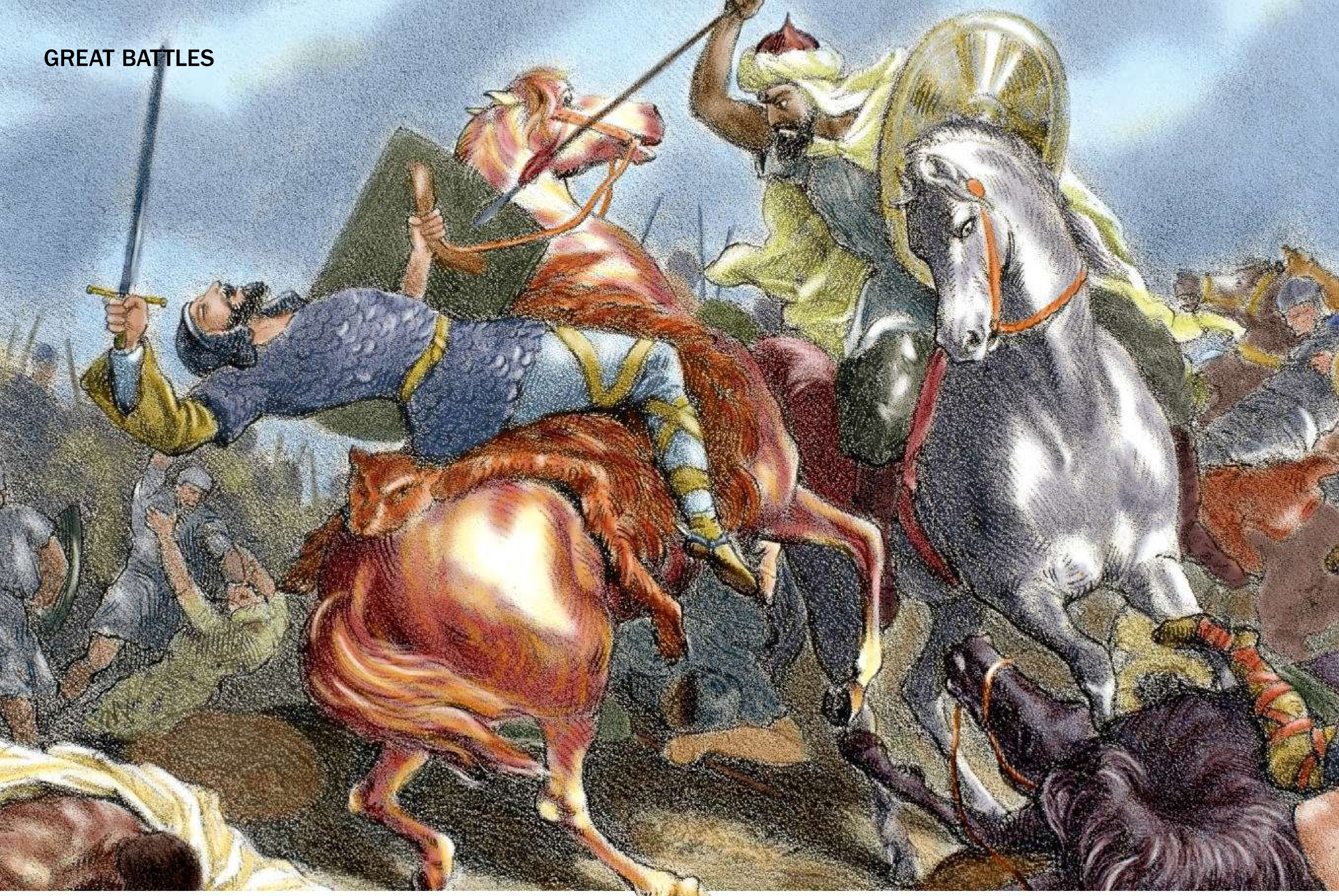
Despite his ruthlessness in battle, Khalid proved wise in victory, offering the local populace the option of paying a protection tax in return for religious freedom. This pioneering jizyah tax, which would later be rolled out across the Muslim empire, endeared him to the Christian Arabs, who saw him as a liberator from the tyrannical Persians. He was able to expand the realm, winning hearts and minds, while developing a far-reaching intelligence network.

The Muslim invasion could not have come at a worse time. Years of Parthian-Sassanid infighting had culminated in the execution of King Khosrow II by his son, Kavadh II. Having killed off most of his siblings, the latter died of plague, leaving his seven-year-old son Ardashir III on the throne – who was, in turn, murdered and overthrown. An ensuing interregnum ended with the unsteady rise of Khosrow's last surviving child, Yazdegerd III, who had only evaded death by going into hiding.

When he heard of the devastating defeat at the Battle of the River, Yazdegerd ordered Andarzaghar, governor of the northeastern Khorasan frontier, to repel the invaders. Another army was to follow closely behind, via a second route, before combining into one enormous force.

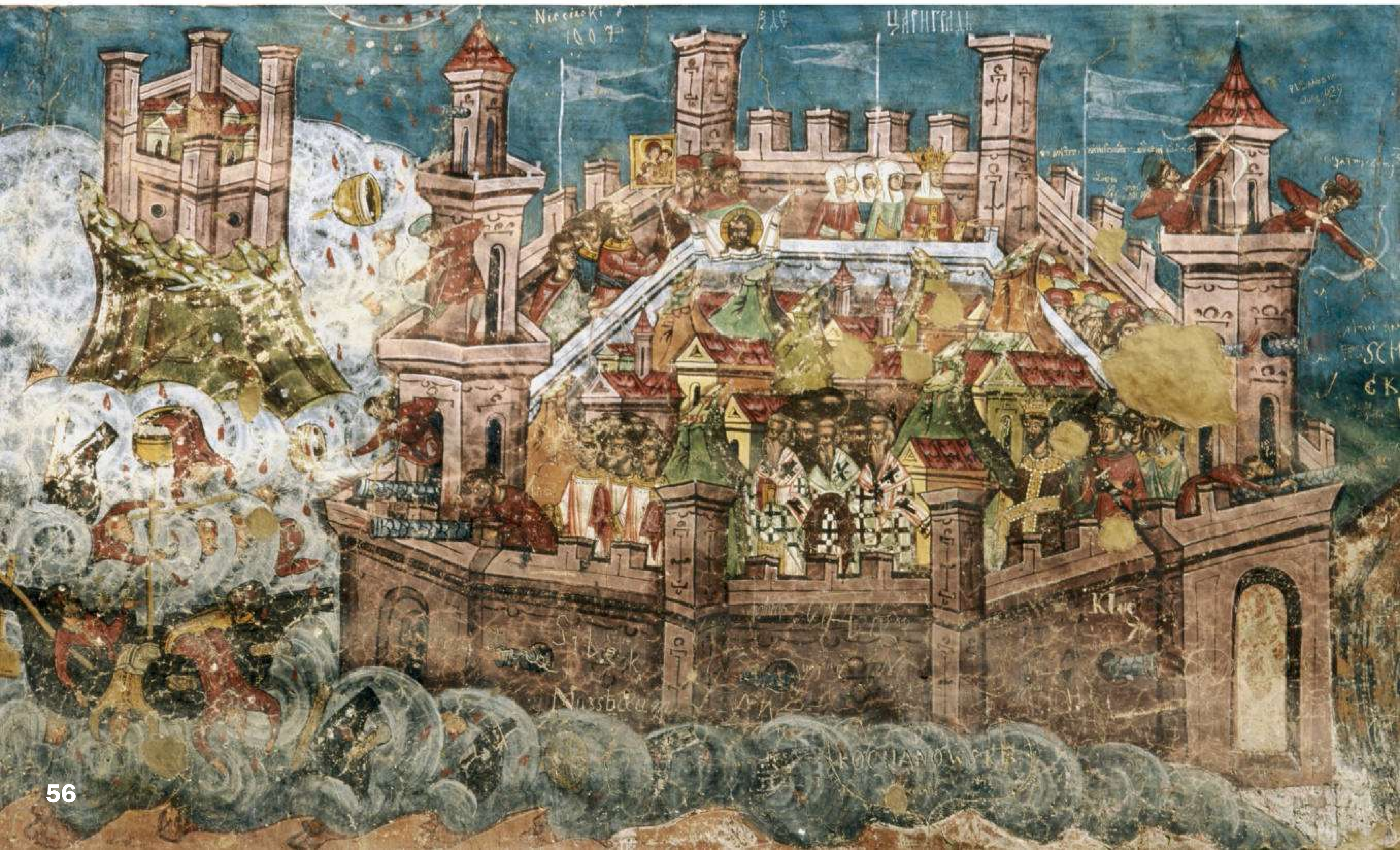
An Iraqi himself, as he passed the capital of Ctesiphon, near modern Baghdad, Andarzaghar was able to levy thousands of Arab allies, before crossing the Euphrates. Emboldened, he stopped at Walaja, an even plain spread 3km between a pair of tall ridges. When Khalid's scouts reported the Persian arrival, he decamped – leaving behind some troops at Al Hufayr and sending a message to those on the lower reaches of the Tigris to stay on guard. Fighting an offensive battle against a Sassanid army three times his size was a suicidal proposition but, to Khalid, failure was not an option. The next engagement would be decisive and if the second Sassanid army arrived before his, Khalid's campaign would truly be over. Never one to back down from a fight, he made his way to Walaja with haste.

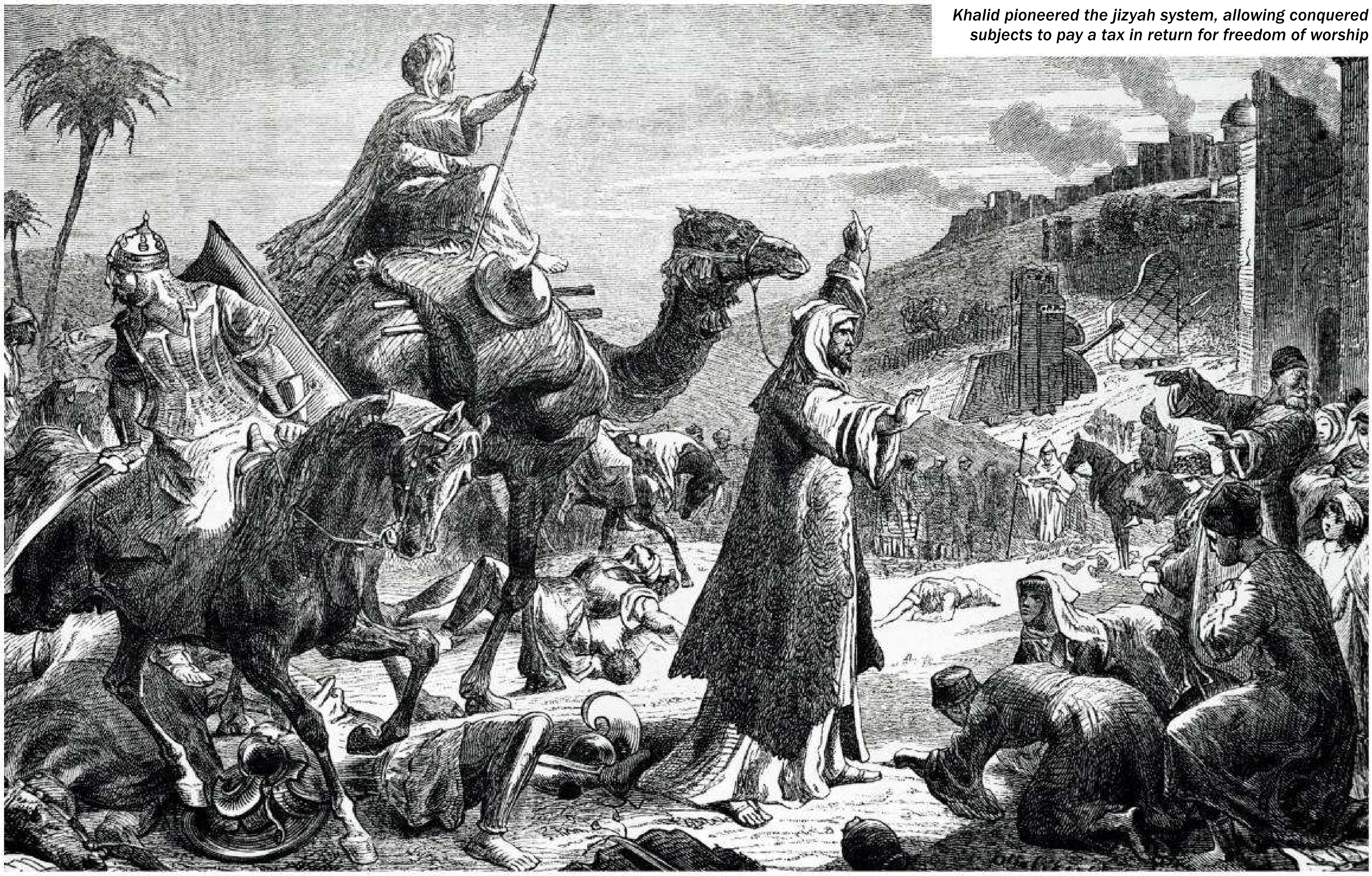
When the Muslim force arrived, Andarzaghar was surprised by how small it was. The survivors of the previous two battles had recalled with terror the apocalyptic hoards of Muslim cavalry, yet here there were virtually none. Having lured the Arabs onto



*Below: After a decades-long war with the Byzantines, the Sassanid court was in chaos*

***Above:** While Khalid's men were poorly equipped, they were incredibly agile*





*Khalid pioneered the jizyah system, allowing conquered subjects to pay a tax in return for freedom of worship*

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an open plain, Andarzaghar planned to make light work of this maniacal general and his trumped-up raiders.

As the two armies stared one another down, Khalid scowled, inviting the Persians to prove their honour in single combat. Andarzaghar sneered, calling over a gargantuan brute known simply as Hazar Mard, or 'A Thousand Men'. Demonstrating his superior Bedouin swordsmanship, Khalid danced around him, cutting him down before supposedly sitting on his corpse and calling for his lunch.

As the real battle commenced, Khalid sent his footsoldiers crashing into a wall of heavy Sassanid infantry, swinging and stabbing wildly. This is exactly where the Persians wanted to fight the Muslims – on foot. Khalid's forces were pushed back, drawing the Persians into a gruelling battle of attrition for every inch. Sand and dust filled the air as Andarzaghar sent in the cavalry, his entire army wrapping itself around Khalid's crescent formation. The Arabs endured the ever-tightening push back with patient determination, their legs trembling, choking and dying beneath the burning sun.

Andarzaghar chuckled to himself. His men were at their limit, but the slippery invader had finally run out of tricks and would soon be utterly broken, with no desert to retreat into. Little did he know, having secretly scouted the area the night before, Khalid had one last trick up his sleeve. Under the cloak of darkness, he had hidden two cavalry contingents behind the ridge to the rear of the Persian lines. Just as the Arab spine began to snap, Khalid finally gave the signal.

**"THE EMPIRE THAT HAD ENDURED CENTURIES OF ROMAN AGGRESSION HAD NOT ONLY LOST TO A SMALLER ARMY OF ARABS SUCCESSIVE TIMES, BUT HAD BEEN UTTERLY DECIMATED"**

They appeared from nowhere, hooves thundering towards the Persians, atop bloodcurdling yells of "Allahu Akbar". Fully engaged with Khalid's line, all the Sassanids could do was look back as the cavalry smashed into their rear, sealing a rarely seen pincer movement, enveloping the Persians on both sides. In just a few moments of chaos, Khalid had sealed the Persian tomb, as Hannibal had done to the Romans at Cannae 800 years earlier. As the Arabs rejoiced, the Persians succumbed to a hell of Khalid's design, trapped in a slow and steady crush of human mass and violence. As his army perished, Andarzaghar squeezed through the gaps and fled, only to die of thirst wandering the desert.

As Khalid's soldiers rifled through the corpses of the vanquished, he boomed: "Do you not see the wealth of the land of the Persians? Do you not remember the poverty of the land of the Arabs?" He continued: "If the holy war were not enjoined by Allah, we should still come and conquer this rich land and exchange the hunger of our deserts for the abundant eating which is now ours." With that, his men roared and leapt for joy.

The aftershocks of Walaja rocked the Sassanids to their core – the empire that had endured centuries of Roman aggression had not only lost to a smaller army of Arabs successive times, but had been utterly decimated. Desperate to protect the wealthy defensive stronghold of Al Hirah, they mounted a last-ditch defence at Ullais, just north of Walaja. After once again defeating an army twice his size, Khalid rounded up all stragglers and beheaded them in groups, day and night, fulfilling a vow to make the Khaseef River "run red" with the blood of 70,000 men. He went on to besiege and capture Al Hirah – accomplishing his ambitious mission within just four months.

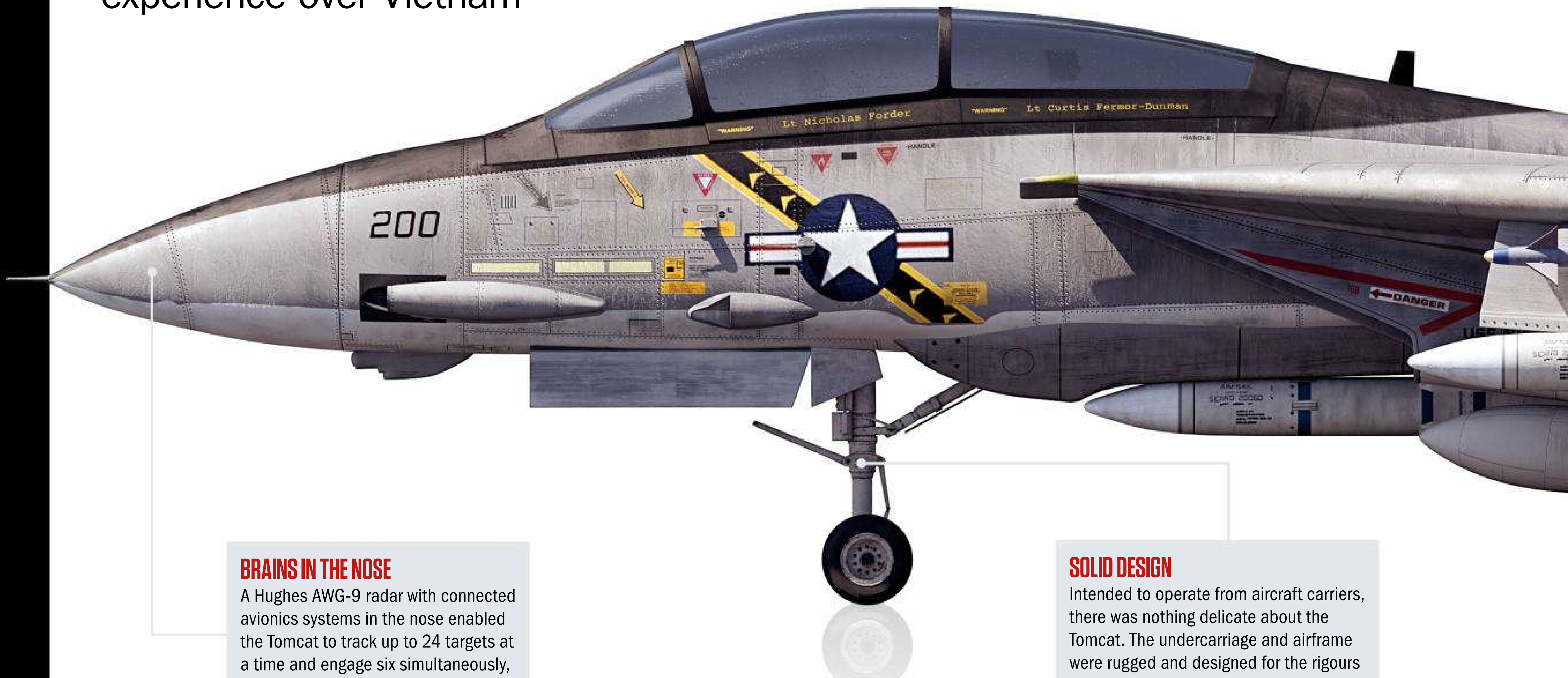
With a Mesopotamian foothold firmly established, Abu Bakr ordered Khalid to invade Byzantine Syria. Mirroring Hannibal's march across the Alps, Khalid dragged 500 men 500km across barren desert. They survived by gorging 30 camels on water, tying their mouths shut and cutting them open along the way. Despite being demoted by the next caliph, Umar ibn Al Khattab, at the legendary Battle of Yarmouk, Khalid defeated a Byzantine army many times larger than his, driving the Romans out of the Levant for good.

Building on Khalid's success, within a century the Arabs would wipe out the Sassanids and wrest away Egypt and Syria from the Byzantines – carving out a realm twice the size of the Roman Empire. The world would never be the same.

# GRUMMAN F-14D TOMCAT

## This United States Navy Cold War fighter was born from bitter experience over Vietnam

WORDS **STUART HADAWAY**



### BRAINS IN THE NOSE

A Hughes AWG-9 radar with connected avionics systems in the nose enabled the Tomcat to track up to 24 targets at a time and engage six simultaneously, at ranges of up to 100km.

### SOLID DESIGN

Intended to operate from aircraft carriers, there was nothing delicate about the Tomcat. The undercarriage and airframe were rugged and designed for the rigours of catapult launches and hard landings.

When design of the F-14 started in 1967, it was already clear that US airpower had taken a step backwards since the Korean War. US fighters over Vietnam were struggling for air superiority against a foe that was (on paper) far inferior. Recent focus had been on shooting missiles at Soviet nuclear bombers rather than engaging in air-to-air combat, and the US had lost the skills, experience and equipment needed to dogfight.

The F-14 was built to fill that gap. Primarily a long-range fleet defence interceptor, it was also an excellent air superiority fighter. The design could handle any fighter operations, with state of the art radar, variable geometry wings, up to eight air-to-air missiles, and also a 20mm cannon for good old-fashioned close-range dogfighting. Shooting to fame and glamour with the hit 1986 movie *Top Gun*, the Tomcat had substance as well as looks. It was the first line of defence of the US Navy through the Cold War, both Gulf Wars, and the fractious campaigns of the 1990s over both Iraq and the Balkans. Tomcats also saw distinguished service in the Islamic Republic of Iran Air Force during the Iran-Iraq War of 1980-88.

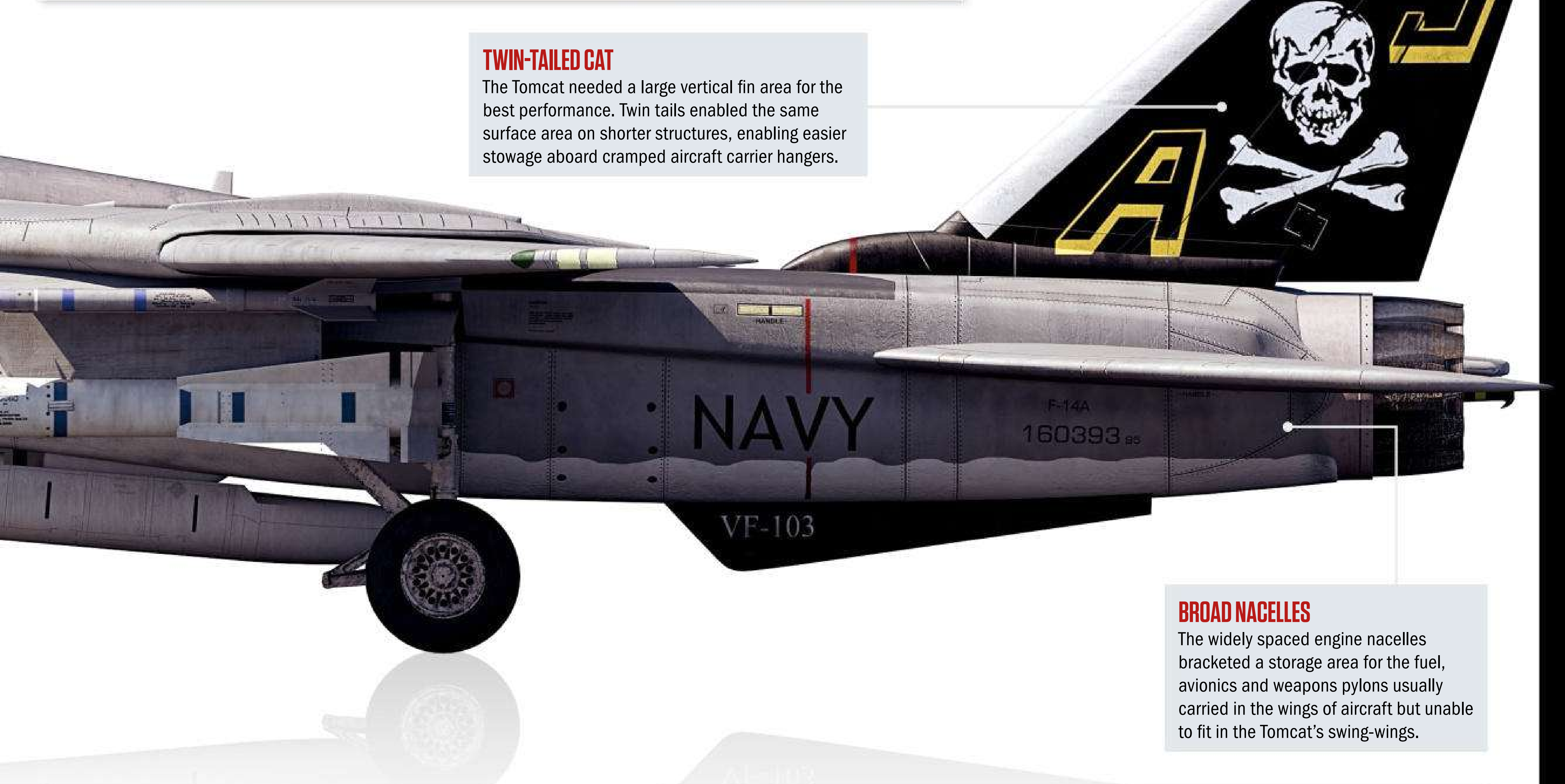
*Feeling the need for speed: an F-14 going supersonic*

**Left:** *Fighter Squadron 14 (VF-14) F-14A Tomcat aircraft fly over the French aircraft carrier FOCH (R 99) during a joint exercise*

## GRUMMAN F-14D TOMCAT

| | |
|---|---|
| COMMISSIONED: | 1969 |
| ORIGIN: | USA |
| LENGTH: | 19.13M |
| WINGSPAN: | 19.5M |
| ENGINE: | 2 X GENERAL ELECTRIC F110-GE-400 73.9 KN (16,610LBF) AFTER-BURNING TURBOFANS |
| CREW: | 2 |
| PRIMARY WEAPON: | UP TO 8 AIR-TO-AIR MISSILES & 1 X 20MM VULCAN CANNON |
| SECONDARY WEAPON: | NON-GUIDED AND GUIDED BOMBS |

Illustration: Nicholas Forder



### TWIN-TAILED CAT

The Tomcat needed a large vertical fin area for the best performance. Twin tails enabled the same surface area on shorter structures, enabling easier stowage aboard cramped aircraft carrier hangers.

### BROAD NACELLES

The widely spaced engine nacelles bracketed a storage area for the fuel, avionics and weapons pylons usually carried in the wings of aircraft but unable to fit in the Tomcat's swing-wings.

> "THE DESIGN COULD HANDLE ANY FIGHTER OPERATIONS, WITH STATE OF THE ART RADAR, VARIABLE GEOMETRY WINGS, UP TO EIGHT AIR-TO-AIR MISSILES, AND ALSO A 20MM CANNON FOR GOOD OLD-FASHIONED CLOSE-RANGE DOGFIGHTING"

*An F-14 Tomcat coming in to land on the USS Nimitz*

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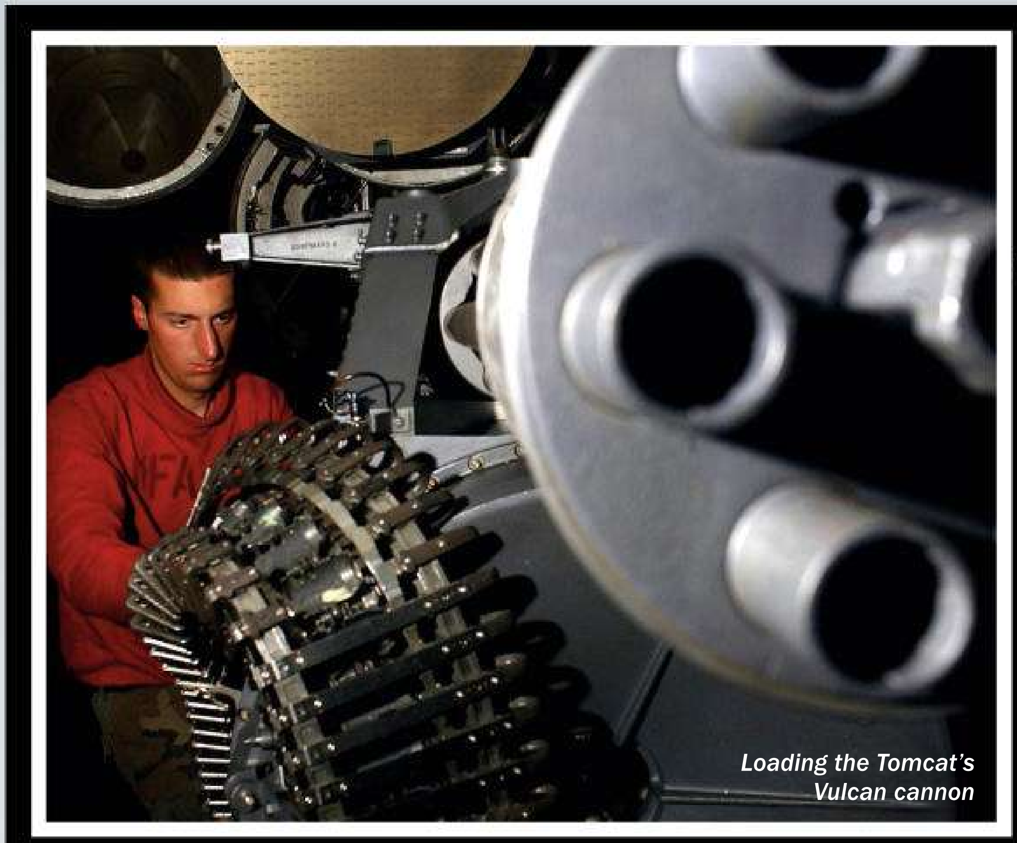
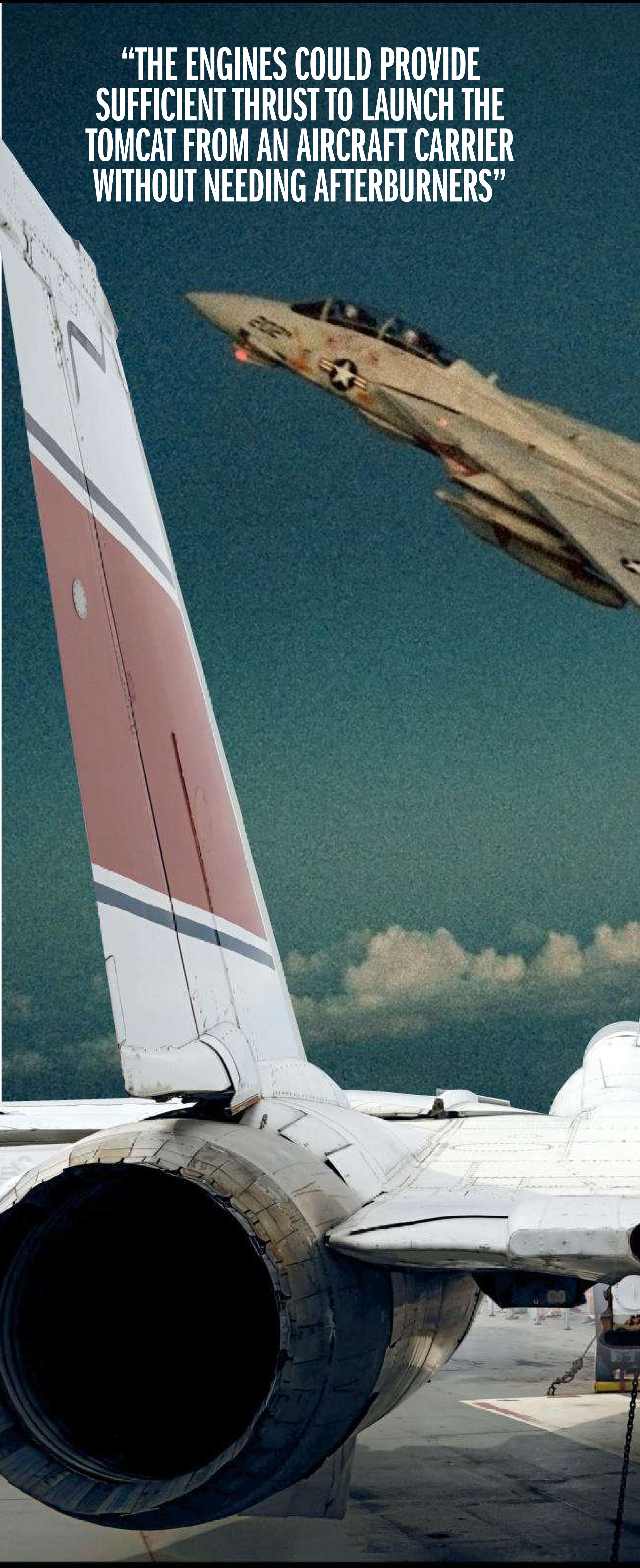


*Loading the Tomcat's Vulcan cannon*

*Tomcat test-firing an AIM-54 Phoenix missile*

## ARMAMENT

The Tomcat had fearsome claws with up to eight air-to-air missiles – half were carried under the fuselage between the engine nacelles and the rest under the wing roots. A mix of AIM-7 Sparrow medium range semi-active radar homing, AIM-9 Sidewinder short range heat-seeking and AIM-54 Phoenix long range hypersonic missiles gave the pilot a broad spectrum of options. For close-in work, a single 20mm M61A-1 Vulcan six-barrelled rotary cannon with 675 rounds was fitted. In the 1990s, the F-14D was upgraded to also use a range of precision and non-guided bombs.

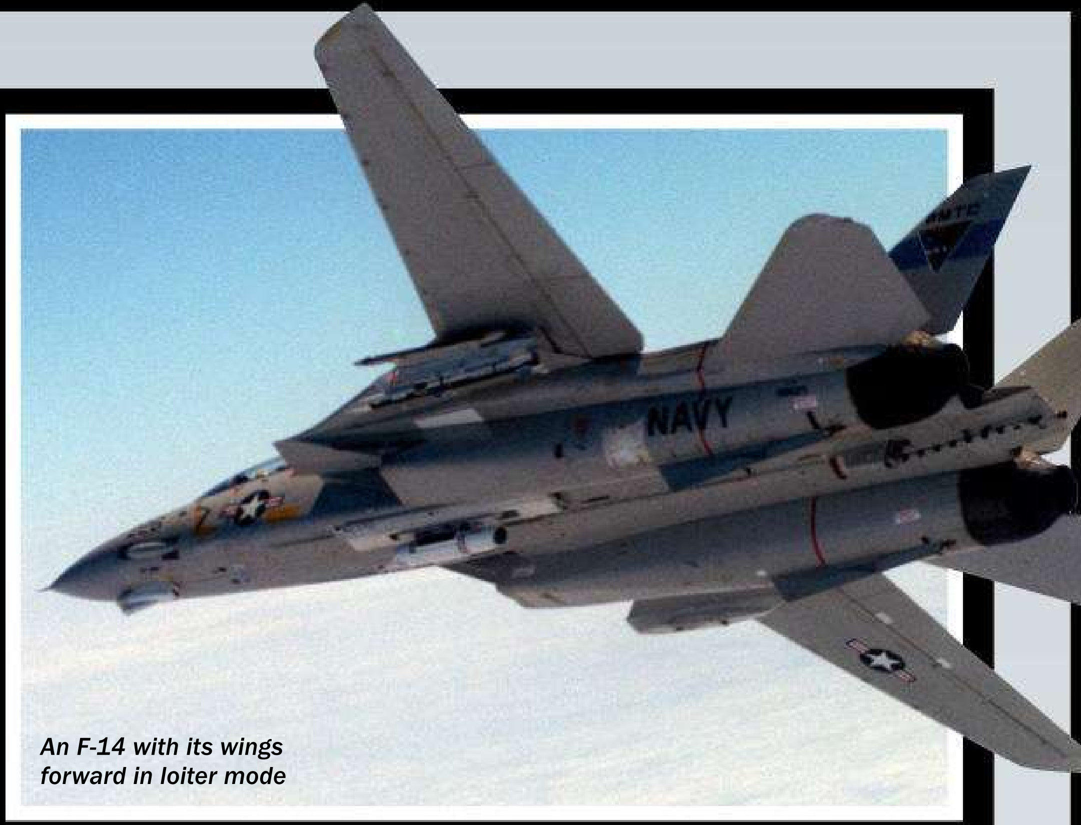


> "THE ENGINES COULD PROVIDE SUFFICIENT THRUST TO LAUNCH THE TOMCAT FROM AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER WITHOUT NEEDING AFTERBURNERS"

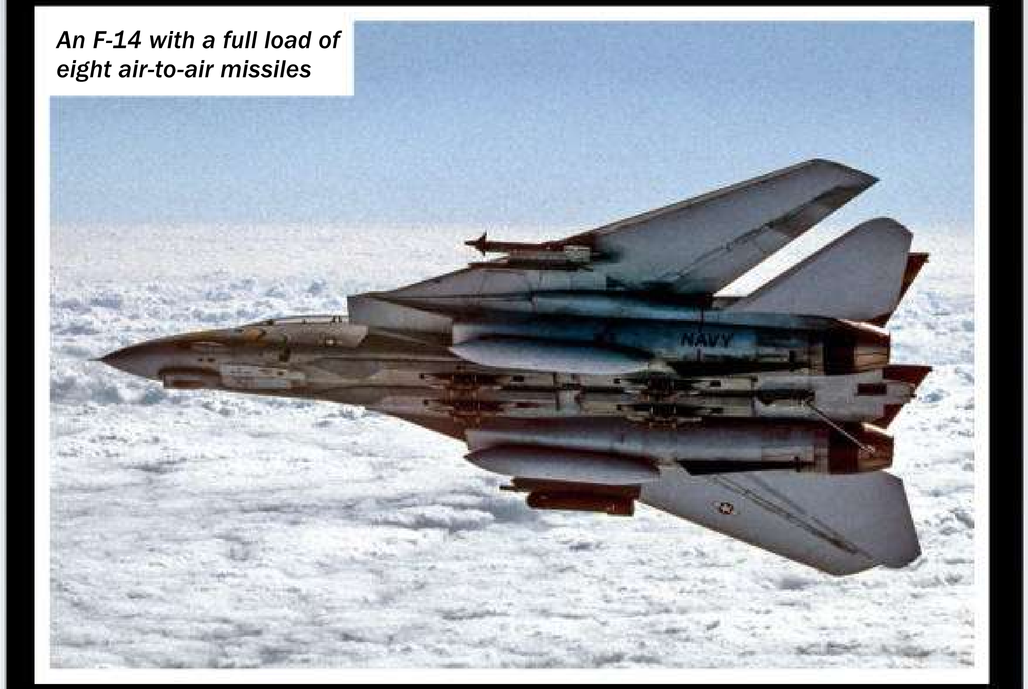
## ENGINE

The early Tomcat F-14As were fitted with Pratt & Whitney TF30 turbofan 93kN (20,900lbf) engines, but a series of reliability issues led to their replacement in the 1980s by General Electric F110-GE-400 turbofans, capable of 73.9kN (16,610lbf) thrust or up to 125kN (28,200lbf) on afterburner. They could provide sufficient thrust to launch the Tomcat from an aircraft carrier without needing afterburners, and push it up to 53,000ft (16,000m) and Mach 2.34. A computerised fuel control system and adjustable air intake and exhaust nozzles optimised performance at all speeds.

*An F-14 climbs on full afterburner*



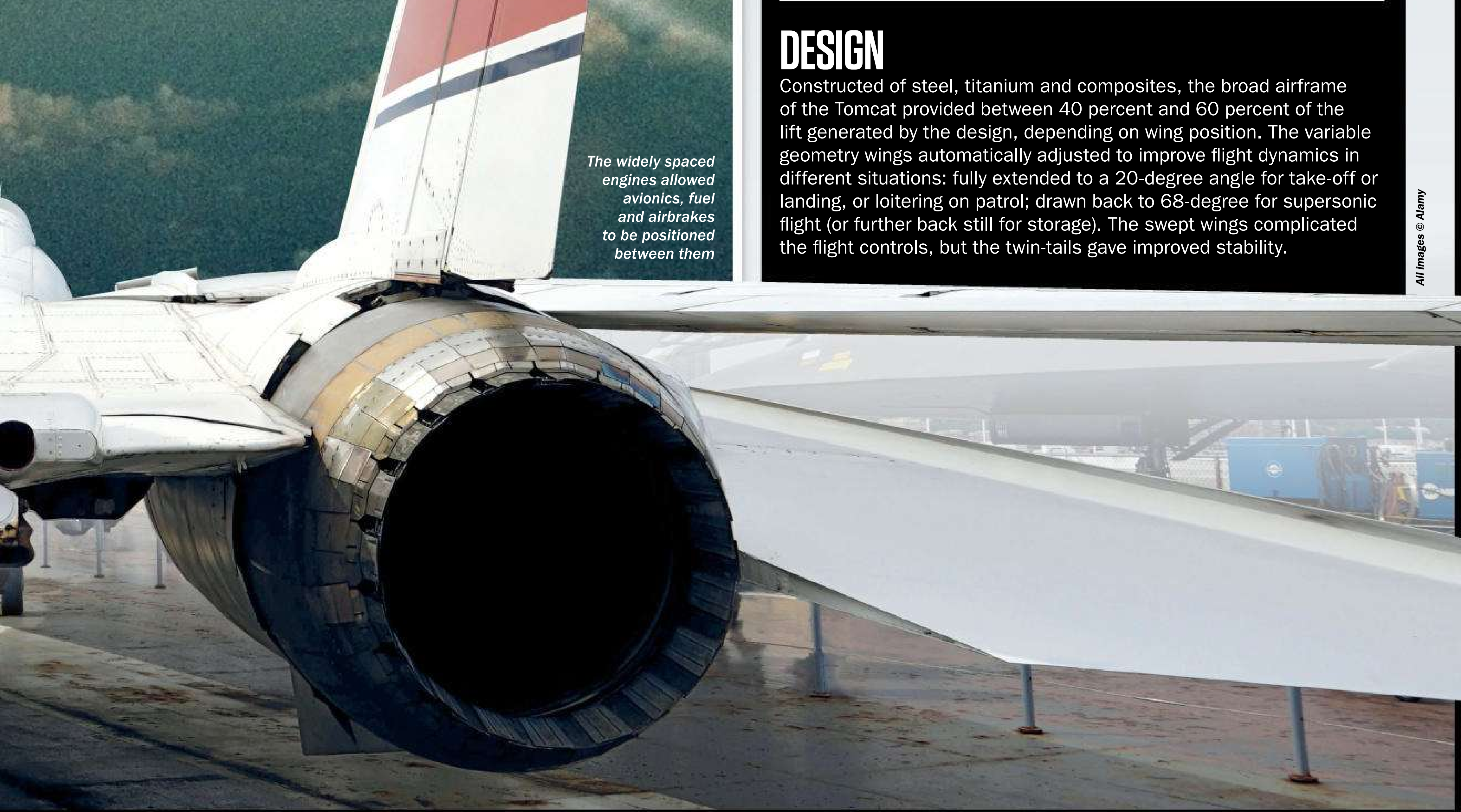
*An F-14 with its wings forward in loiter mode*



*An F-14 with a full load of eight air-to-air missiles*

## DESIGN

Constructed of steel, titanium and composites, the broad airframe of the Tomcat provided between 40 percent and 60 percent of the lift generated by the design, depending on wing position. The variable geometry wings automatically adjusted to improve flight dynamics in different situations: fully extended to a 20-degree angle for take-off or landing, or loitering on patrol; drawn back to 68-degree for supersonic flight (or further back still for storage). The swept wings complicated the flight controls, but the twin-tails gave improved stability.



*The widely spaced engines allowed avionics, fuel and airbrakes to be positioned between them*

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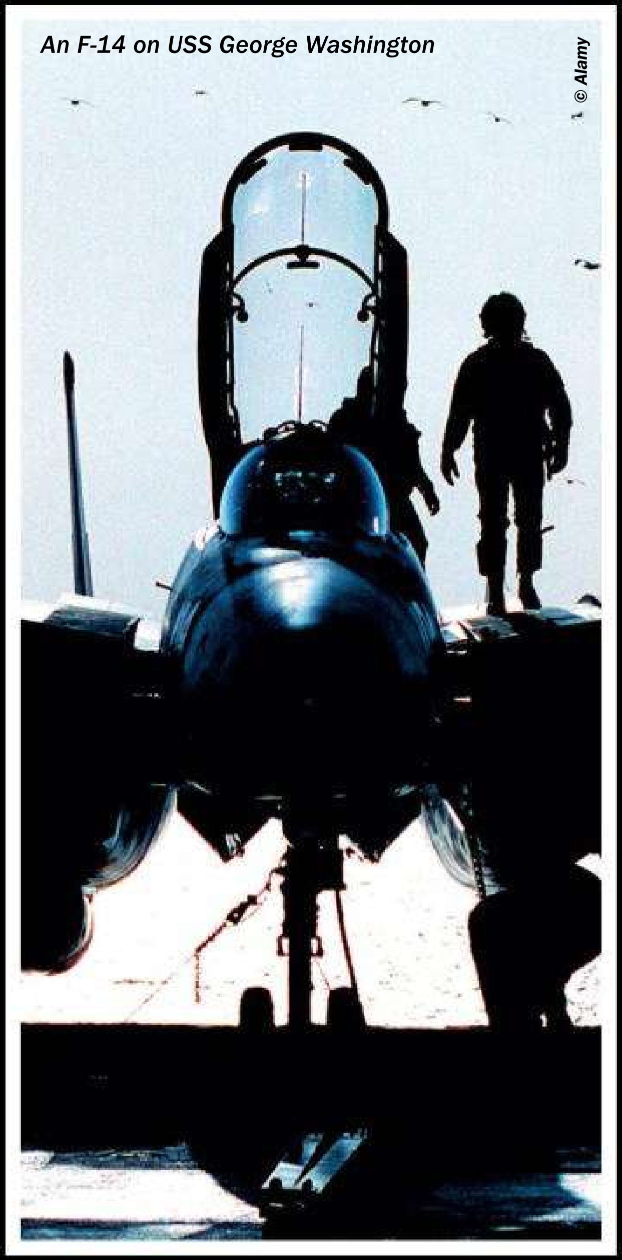
*An Islamic Republic of Iran Air Force F-14A Tomcat, in flight in 2018*

## SERVICE HISTORY

After a first flight in 1970, the F-14 entered frontline service with the US Navy in 1974. By 1983 it was the USN's primary fleet defence fighter and had already proven its worth. In August 1981, two F-14s were engaged by two Libyan Sukhoi Su-22s. The F-14s evaded the attack and retaliated by shooting down both Su-22s. Tomcats would see active service in the Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and over the Balkans. The type achieved multiple successes in air-to-air and later an air-to-ground role, with only a single aircraft being lost to enemy action. It was withdrawn from US service in 2006.

The Tomcat also saw extensive combat during the Iran-Iraq War (1980-88) – the Shah of Iran had received 79 Tomcats before the Iranian Revolution of 1979. Tomcats achieved an excellent kill-to-loss ratio in the subsequent war with Iraq and, despite being starved of spare parts, small numbers remain in Iranian service today.



*An F-14 on USS George Washington*

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> **"THE TYPE ACHIEVED MULTIPLE SUCCESSES IN AIR-TO-AIR AND LATER AN AIR-TO-GROUND ROLE, WITH ONLY A SINGLE AIRCRAFT BEING LOST TO ENEMY ACTION"**

*The crew sat high with a good all-round view*

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***Left:*** *The weapon's officer's view; numerous mirrors helped them keep lookout to the rear*

***Above:*** *The crew used a hybrid of digital and analogue controls and displays*

## COCKPIT

The Tomcat boasted a tandem cockpit for the two crew, with pilot in front and weapons officer behind. The bubble cockpit allowed both crew members good views for close air combat. Only the pilot had flight controls, but both enjoyed a hybrid of digital and analogue controls and displays. A heads-up display gave the pilot essential flight information in their forward field of view. An electro-optical system automatically searched for and locked onto targets, displaying them on a small video screen.

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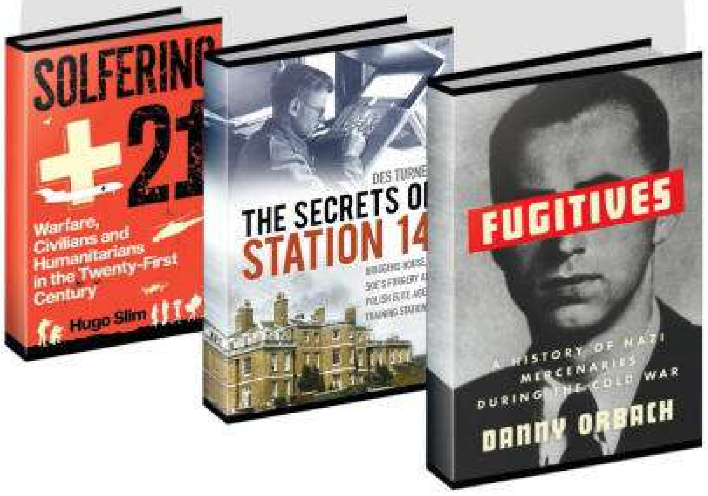
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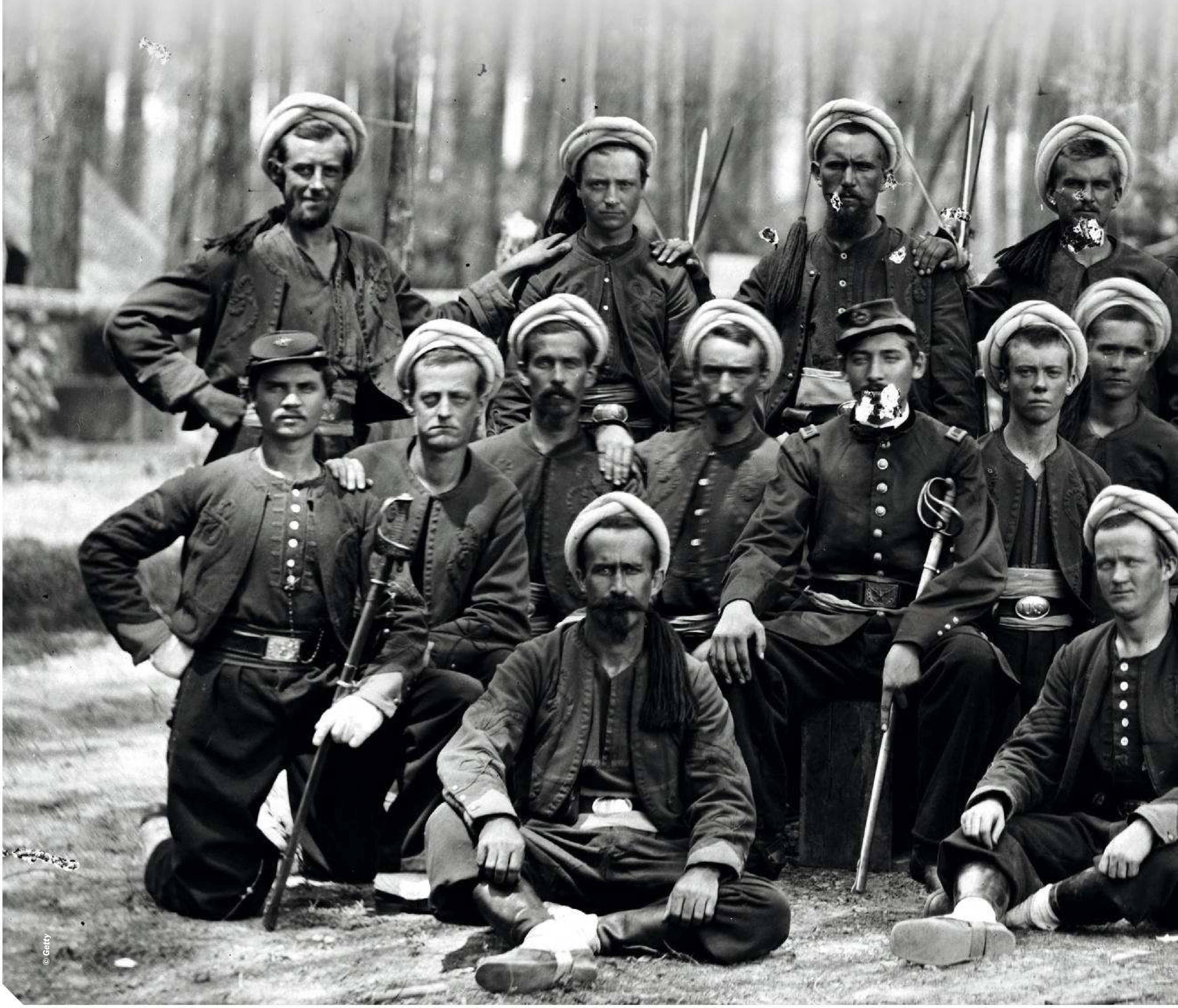
# AMERICA'S ZOUAVES

## Historian and author Iain MacGregor shares his passion for the brightly uniformed infantrymen who served in the US Civil War, and interrogates some of the myths about their combat role

I have been passionate about the history of the American Civil War (1861-65) for over 40 years. As a young schoolboy I first discovered the war itself in school history books and was captivated by one battle in particular – Gettysburg, 1863. From there I dug deeper to discover the politics, strategies, seminal battles and of course the armies and units from each side of the conflict. History was to be my chosen path once I decided to enter the world of publishing and I have been fortunate enough to commission and edit many books on this conflict as well as travel to the United States of America with my job. Over the past few years I have been able to travel to some of the key locations on the eastern seaboard of the USA, specifically in Virginia and Pennsylvania, to visit various sites of the Civil War – one of which, of course, was Gettysburg National Military Park.

In my role as a publisher and as a fan of all things connected to the American Civil War, one of my favourite books I constantly return to is *Don Troiani's Civil War*. As many readers

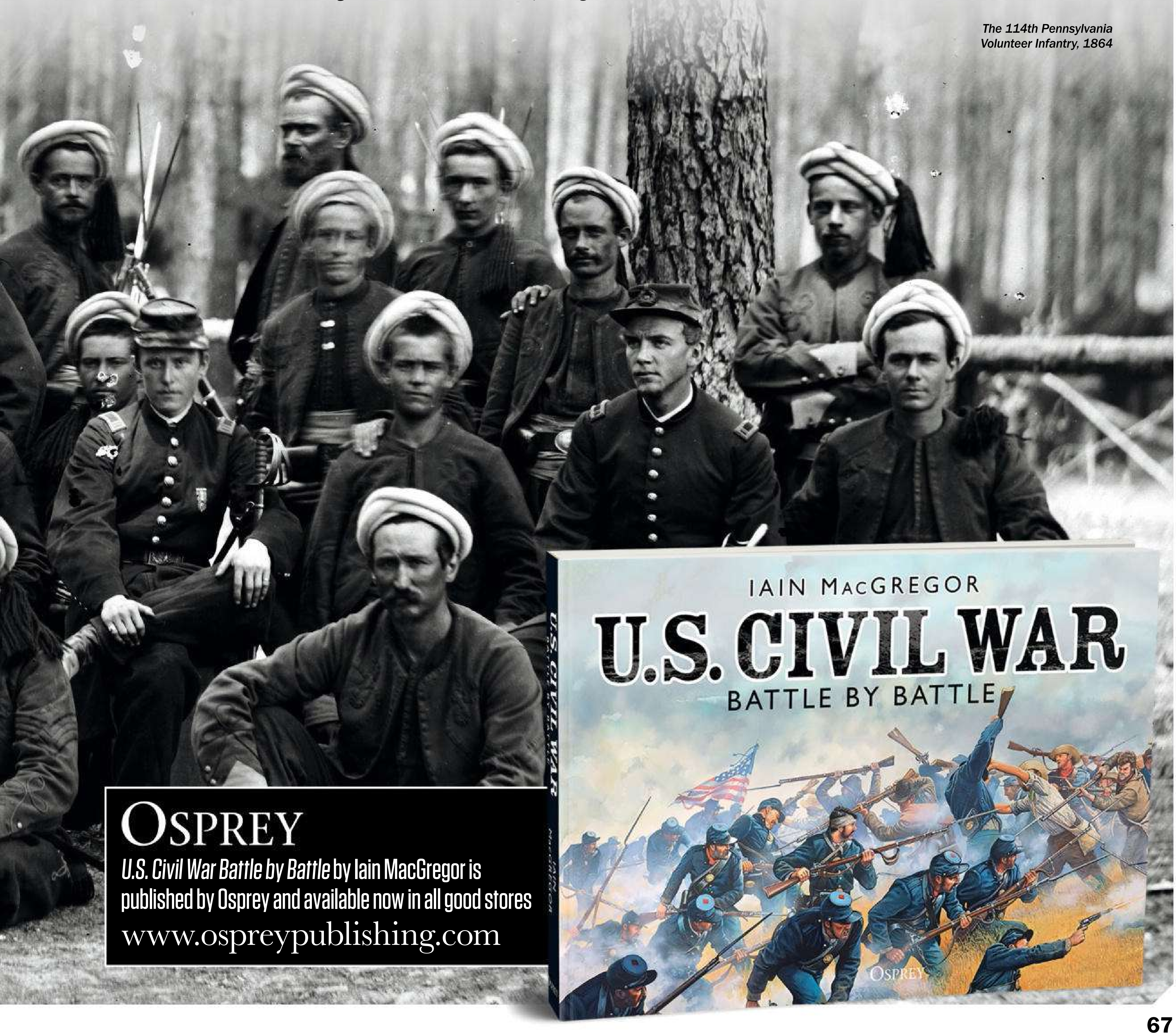


© Getty

will know, the artwork of renowned historical painter Don Troiani has brought the colour, dash, passion and bravery of the fight between Confederate and Union forces to a quite remarkable level. His attention to artistic detail and historical accuracy is second to none and for me still remains one of the best sources of reference material to work with.

One cannot help but marvel at the scale of Troiani's portrayal of key moments in pivotal battles, moments that either turned the tide towards victory or catastrophic defeat for one side or the other. One such is *Barksdale's Charge, Battle of Gettysburg 1863*, which captures the chaos and bloody valour of the war's climatic three-day battle in a sleepy Pennsylvania farming town in the summer of 1863. Troiani showcases the advance on day two of Brigadier General William Barksdale's Mississippi brigade into the firestorm awaiting them as Lee ordered General Longstreet's corps to launch a general assault on the Union left flank, which he aimed to roll up on and destroy. Barksdale's battalions advanced towards the Union forces defending the heights beyond Gettysburg, not realising one enemy formation had themselves advanced downhill to create a salient in the Union lines. Barksdale's brigade was one of many that would engulf the Union lines, fighting for key positions that would become famous after the battle: the Devil's Den, the Wheatfield and the Peach Orchard. The latter witnessed scenes of some of the fiercest fighting of the battle, with Barksdale's men fully engaged.

The Mississippians advanced towards the Peach Orchard with a farmhouse in the background and came up against Union forces belonging to Meade's 3rd Corps, commanded by Major General Daniel E Sickles, that had been placed in their advance in error. It is here in Troiani's painting that I was drawn to the Union forces in the distance as they prepared to meet the Confederate juggernaut. It was an elite unit, the 114th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. Like many on that second day of fighting as the Union left flank attempted to thwart Longstreet's powerful flanking attack by feeding individual units into the fray, the 114th Volunteers were overwhelmed by sheer numbers of the enemy and severely mauled (50 percent casualties). Though interested in the action the painting conveys, my eye was taken by the dress and look of the Union troops – they resembled men out of place on the battlefield, more akin to North Africa. The 114th wore brilliant brick-red pleated trousers, short dark-blue jackets, a brighter blue sash around their waste, white canvas leggings and, to top it all off, a turban wrapped around a red fez. They looked like nothing I had seen before from my previous books and I was intrigued and keen to find out more.



*The 114th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, 1864*

IAIN MACGREGOR
U.S. CIVIL WAR
BATTLE BY BATTLE
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*U.S. Civil War Battle by Battle* by Iain MacGregor is published by Osprey and available now in all good stores
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I had published many titles for Osprey's *Campaign* series on the Civil War, such as *Shiloh 1862*, *Fredericksburg 1862*, *Chancellorsville 1862* and, of course, *Gettysburg 1863*. I'd also produced various titles connected to the conflict for Osprey's *Men-at-Arms*, *Warrior* and *Elite* series of titles, each offering a different angle and level of expertise on uniforms, weaponry, flags, tactics and the soldiers and officers themselves. Upon studying Troiani's book, I was pleased to be told we would now produce a title that remains to this day a firm favourite of mine. It was written by Robin Smith for the *Elite* series: *No.62 American Civil War Zouaves*, illustrated by the brilliant Bill Younghusband, a regular contributor for Osprey books over the years. It was Robin's book that finally cemented in place the various threads I had collected on the legend of the various units who served on both sides of the war who followed the style that had swept through Europe and the United States prior to hostilities commencing in April 1861.

The first Zouave units that sported their distinctive look derived from the French Army as it established its early empire in North Africa, specifically Algiers in the early years of the 19th century. The French term for this new light infantry unit derived from the actual North African Berber tribesmen – the Zouaoua – whose men enlisted for the first regiment formed in 1830. It numbered some 500 local men commanded by French officers and NCOs, which was then expanded in size as their role in policing the French colony expanded – many French settlers also joined. The unit's attire very much reflected the population from which it had been formed: the native North Africans dressed in light baggy trousers, a short jacket and a fez. It was a suitable uniform for the conditions they would find themselves in as they protected the growing French gains in the continent.

By the 1850s France, now allied to Britain, was bogged down in the Crimean War fought against Imperial Russia. The French Army now had three full regiments of Zoauves, comprising primarily of white Frenchmen, keen to serve in what was now considered to be an elite fighting force that would go on to win many accolades on the battlefield. The craze of this elite unit with its unique look would soon spread across Europe as ex-officers took their skills and experience to other paymasters. Soon there would be a regiment that served Pope Pius IX known as the Papal Zouaves, and also a regiment raised in Poland known as the Zouaves of Death. But the legend of the Zouave brand would find its place in American history, too, championed by a young man who would never see action once the civil war began.

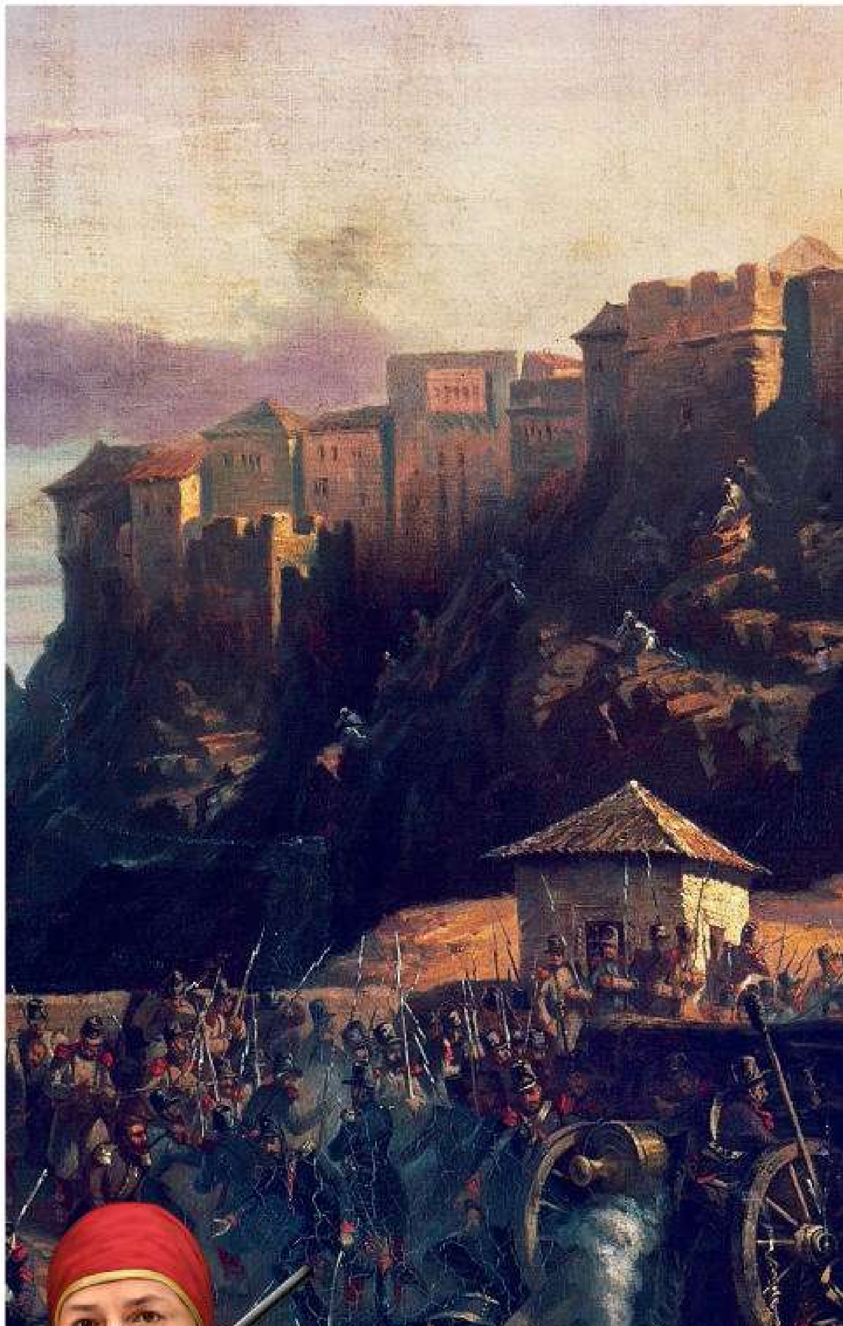
The Zouave craze across the United States would be ignited by one Elmer E Ellsworth, a close friend of Abraham Lincoln. They both resided in Springfield, Illinois, before Lincoln was had risen to occupy the White House. By 1860, Ellsworth was already a colonel of the National Guard Cadets by the time he befriended Lincoln and was recognised for his skills in drilling military units. A student of military science, his discovery of the Zouaves in Europe inspired him to seek permission to take a regular company of the Illinois State Militia and convert them in both dress and military technique to North America's first such formation: the United States Zouave Cadets. Ellsworth then embarked his new unit across the country, challenging any other, whether regular, state or city unit, to compete in drill with his Zouaves. On a 19-city tour before the country was engulfed in civil war, the Zouave Cadets captured the imagination of the American public as Ellsworth's men displayed their professionalism and zeal, dazzling the crowds with their precision formation drills.

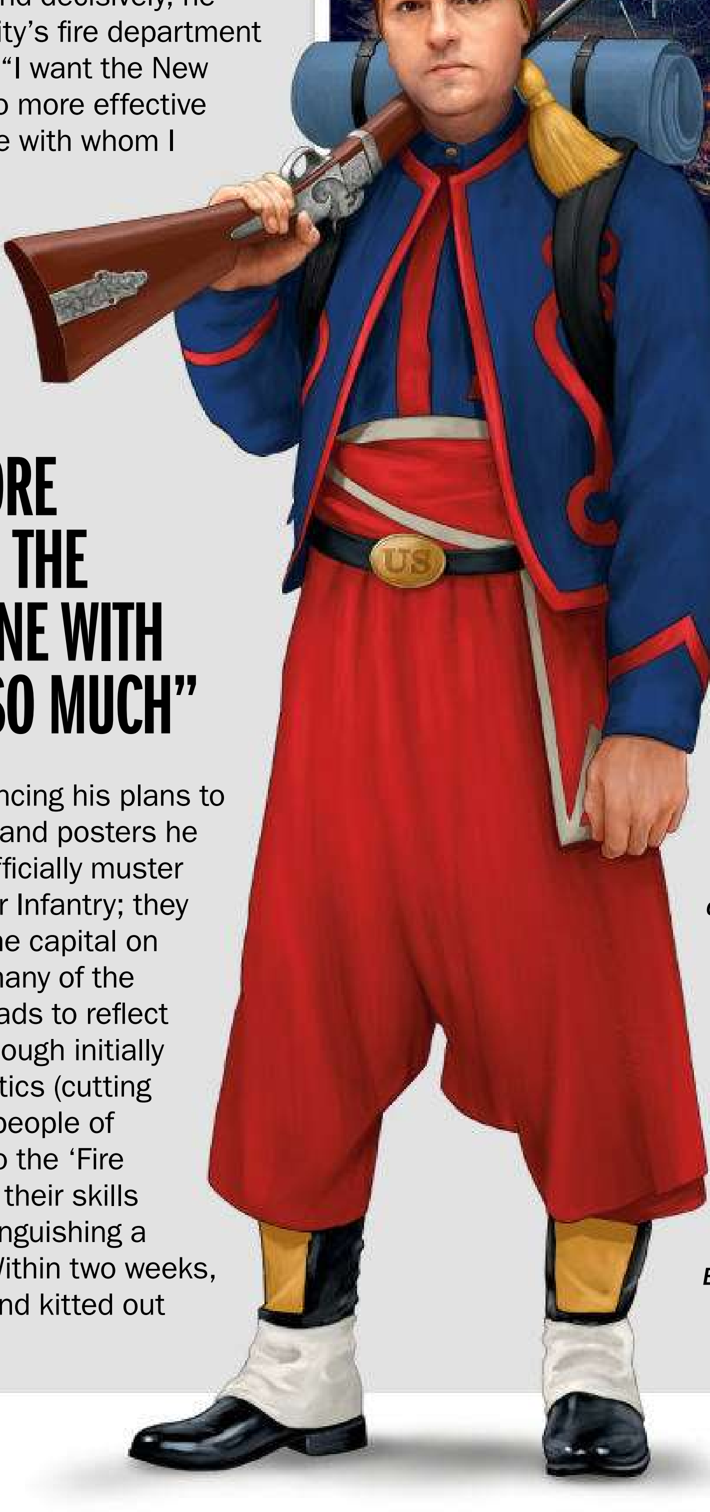
Clothing, feeding and accommodating such a prestigious unit to undertake such public relations work, though successful, came at a financial cost – one which Ellsworth himself struggled to meet. Within a year the unit was disbanded due to a lack of financial support and he made his way to join Lincoln as he assumed the presidency of the United States, working within his office in Washington DC. As the political debate raging between the states north and south reached boiling point with Lincoln's election victory, both sides prepared for what many had previously thought impossible – military conflict. Ellsworth, like many young men attracted by the spectacle and excitement of war, had by the start of 1861 enlisted and had been commissioned as a second lieutenant in the US regular army.

By the beginning of the war in April, already bored of regular army life, Ellsworth had sought permission to return to his native New York and persuade the city fathers to recruit and build their own Zouave regular unit. Specific in the kind of men he required to justify the new unit's ethos of exemplary discipline, tenacity and ability to react quickly and decisively, he pinpointed the men of the city's fire department as perfect recruits, stating: "I want the New York firemen for there are no more effective men in the country and none with whom I can do so much."

**"I WANT THE NEW YORK FIREMEN FOR THERE ARE NO MORE EFFECTIVE MEN IN THE COUNTRY AND NONE WITH WHOM I CAN DO SO MUCH"**

Within two days of announcing his plans to the city's public via adverts and posters he had enough volunteers to officially muster the 11th New York Volunteer Infantry; they were transported down to the capital on 7 May to general acclaim, many of the men having shaved their heads to reflect their elite fighting status. Though initially wary of their over-the-top antics (cutting a pig's throat in public) the people of Washington soon warmed to the 'Fire Zouaves' once they had put their skills to good use to assist in extinguishing a shop that had caught fire. Within two weeks, having now been supplied and kitted out

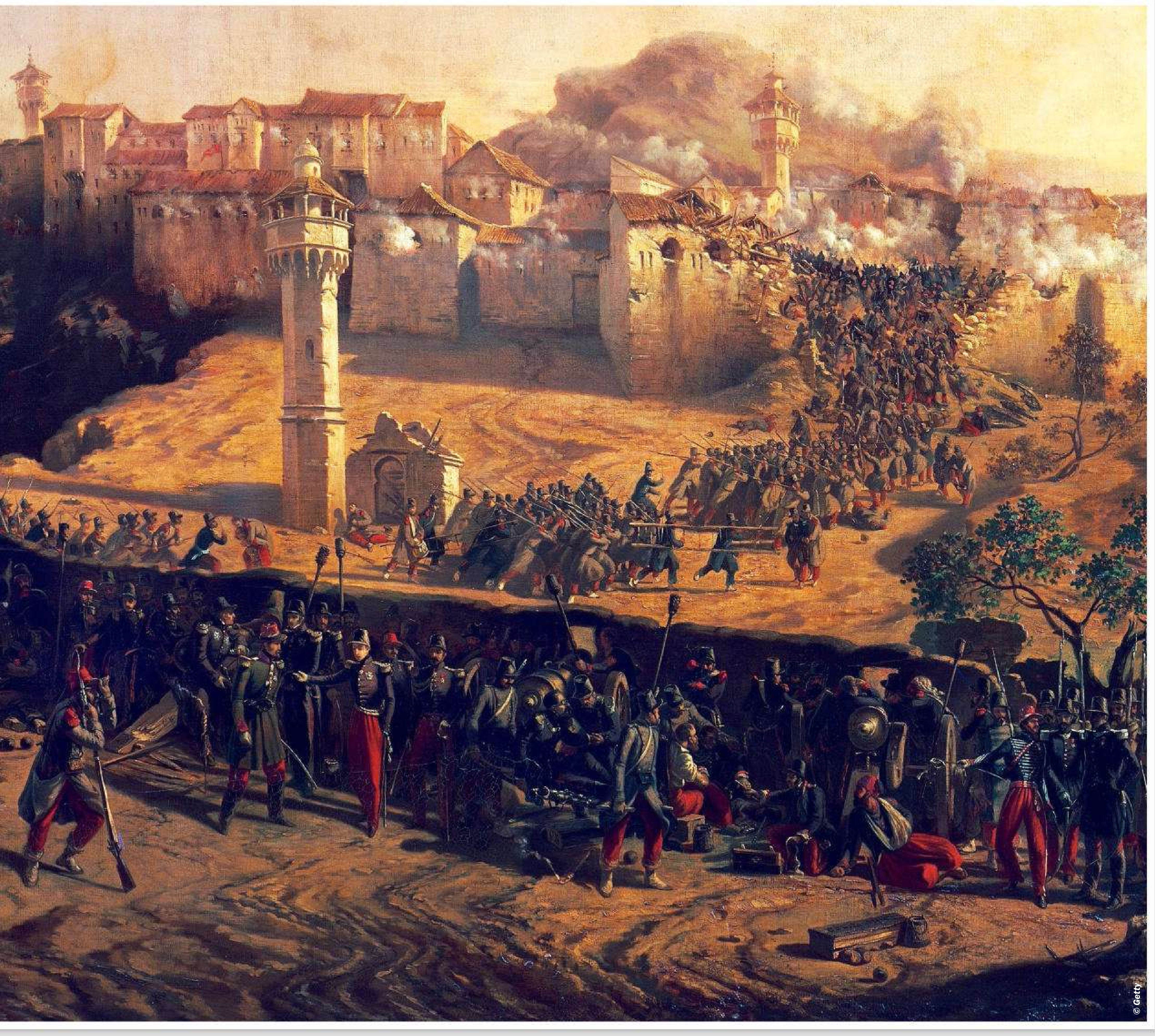




*Left: In the US Civil War the Zouave units' distinctive uniform was drawn from the early 19th century French Army's infantry in North Africa*

*Above: French Zouaves storm the city of Constantine in Algeria, 13 October 1837*

*Right: The camp of 114th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, Brandy Station, Virginia, February 1864*



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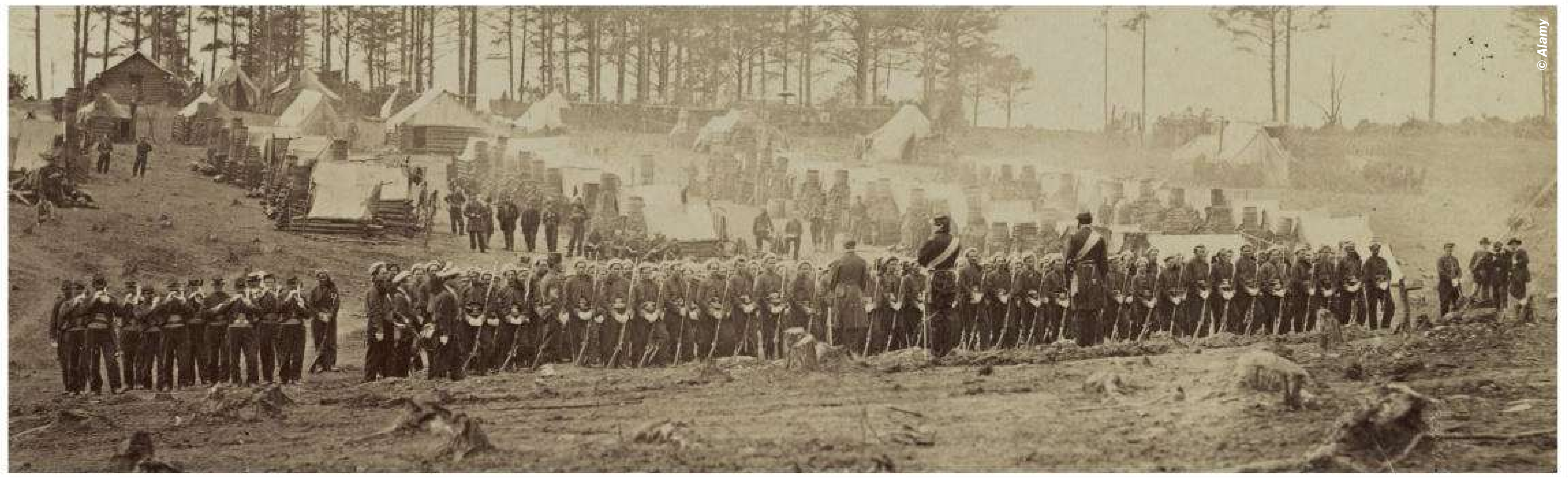


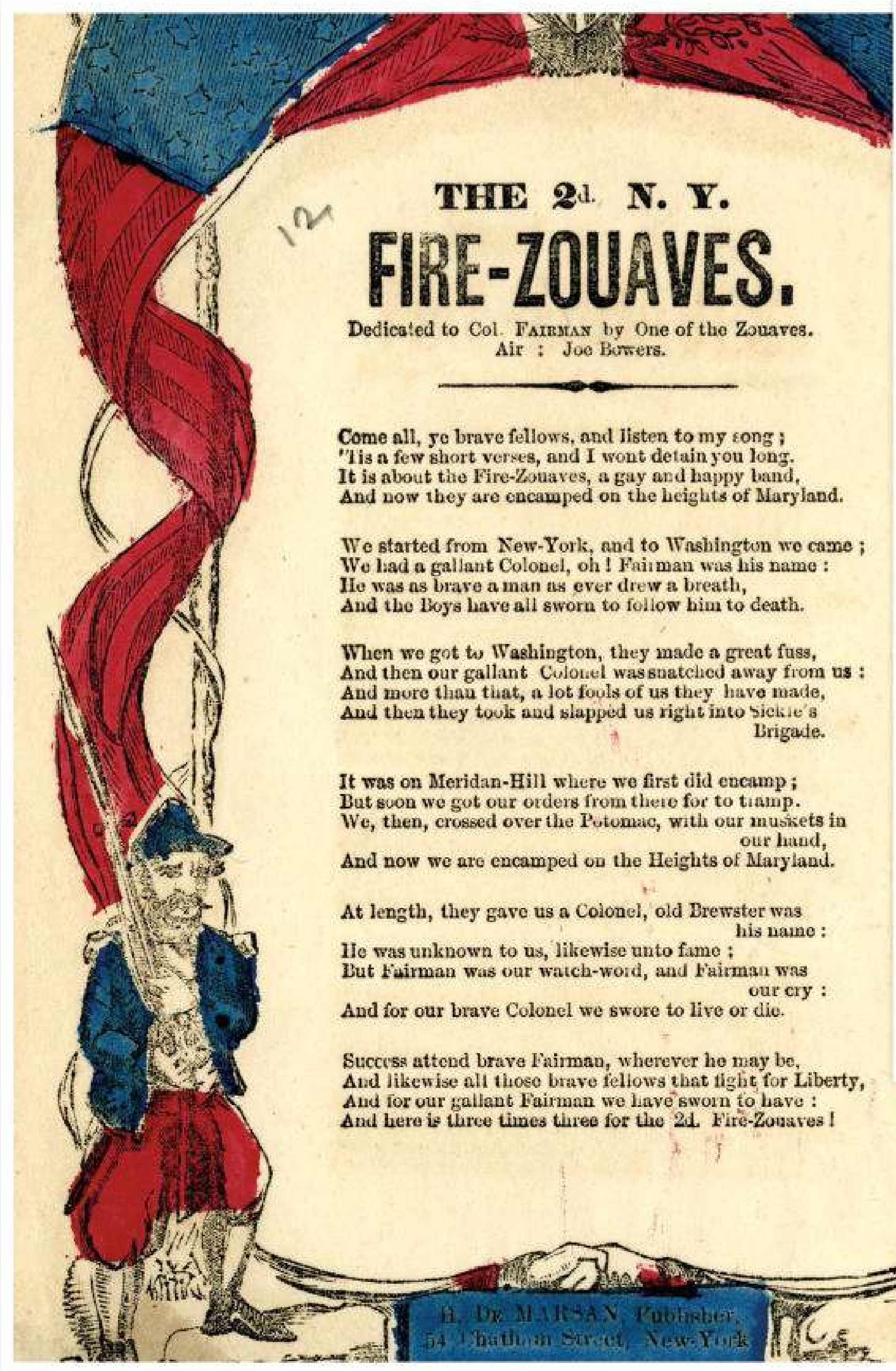
© Alamy

in their distinctive attire and fully armed, the regiment moved out towards Virginia. It would be here that their founder was cut down barely months into the war.

Ellsworth was shot and killed as he attempted to remove a Confederate flag from a tavern in the town of Alexandria, from which his men had recently driven out rebel troops. The young colonel was gunned down by the tavern owner, who in turn was cut down by a corporal of the Zouaves. The reaction, both within his own regiment and across Washington, was severe. Initially Ellsworth's men had to be ordered at the point of a gun by their officers not to torch the town in revenge for their commander's death. In the capital, Lincoln ordered his body be brought back to lie in state and his funeral service to be held in the White House itself. The Northern press hailed Ellsworth as the first hero of the conflict.

The Fire Zouaves' new leader was a confidante of their deceased commander – Lieutenant Colonel Noah Farnham. The 11th New York survived its first battle at Bull Run (Manassas) in July 1861, where they faced off against the 1st Virginia Cavalry of JEB Stewart, a dashing horseman who would become a legend over the next three years of fighting. Ellsworth's regiment was broken up after the calamity of the northern defeat, with its men dispersed to new units created to build the Army of the Potomac.

> **"ELLSWORTH'S MEN HAD TO BE ORDERED AT THE POINT OF A GUN BY THEIR OFFICERS NOT TO TORCH THE TOWN IN REVENGE FOR THEIR COMMANDER'S DEATH"**



12

THE 2d. N. Y.

FIRE-ZOUAVES.

Dedicated to Col. FAIRMAN by One of the Zouaves.
Air : Joe Bowers.

Come all, ye brave fellows, and listen to my song ;
'Tis a few short verses, and I wont detain you long.
It is about the Fire-Zouaves, a gay and happy band,
And now they are encamped on the heights of Maryland.

We started from New-York, and to Washington we came ;
We had a gallant Colonel, oh ! Fairman was his name :
He was as brave a man as ever drew a breath,
And the Boys have all sworn to follow him to death.

When we got to Washington, they made a great fuss,
And then our gallant Colonel wassnatched away from us :
And more than that, a lot fools of us they have made,
And then they took and slapped us right into Sickle's
Brigade.

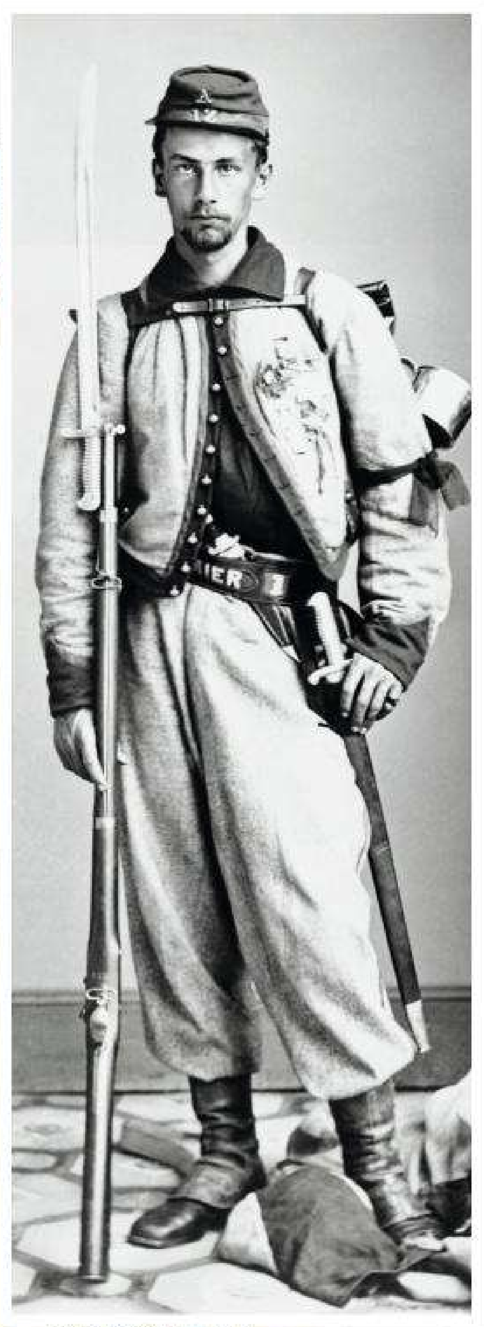
It was on Meridan-Hill where we first did encamp ;
But soon we got our orders from there for to tramp.
We, then, crossed over the Potomac, with our muskets in
our hand,
And now we are encamped on the Heights of Maryland.

At length, they gave us a Colonel, old Brewster was
his name :
He was unknown to us, likewise unto fame ;
But Fairman was our watch-word, and Fairman was
our cry :
And for our brave Colonel we swore to live or die.

Success attend brave Fairman, wherever he may be,
And likewise all those brave fellows that fight for Liberty,
And for our gallant Fairman we have sworn to have :
And here is three times three for the 2d. Fire-Zouaves !

H. De MARSAN, Publisher,
54 Chatham Street, New-York

*Above: A broadside titled The 2nd NY Fire-Zouaves tells the story of the New York Volunteer Infantry, nicknamed the Fire Zouaves, 1863*



*Inset, above: Private Francis E Brownell of the Fire Zouaves – New York City firemen were recruited for their discipline, tenacity and ability to react quickly and decisively*

Images © Getty

The Fire Zouaves would not be the first such formation to go into battle for the Union. Just ten days after the first shells fell on Fort Sumter in North Carolina, another Zouave unit recruited in New York City which had been inspired by Ellsworth, the 5th Volunteer Infantry led by Colonel Abram Duryee, took to the field on the Virginia Peninsula as both sides skirmished north of the state capital Richmond. Duryee's unit played a small part in what can be seen as a small-scale firefight, but the 5th New York's (aka Duryee's Zouaves) fighting record would be an exemplary one, seeing major action in the battles in Northern Virginia such as at Gaine's Mill, Second Bull Run, Antietam, Fredricksburg and Chancellorsville. Their ranks were reduced from the 848 men that had marched down Fifth Avenue in May 1861 to less than 300 returning home to barracks two years later.

New York itself would muster various Zouave units other than those of Ellsworth and Duryee. Some regiments grew out of a consequence of Ellsworth's popularity pre-civil war, while others evolved during the first year of the conflict as officers who had seen action with Ellsworth or Duryee moved on to create their own units with which to carry on the zeal and elan of the Zouaves. The 9th New York Volunteer Infantry, or Hawkin's Zouaves, (whose motto was 'Always Ready') was created in April 1861, as was the 10th New York National Zouaves; the 165th New York (consisting of many veterans from Duryee's old regiment) was formed on 28 November 1862; and the 5th New York Veterans mustered in 1864. Across the north, east to west, countless Zouave units were created as young men were attracted by what such a unit offered in terms of training, dress and esprit de corps. From Boston to New Jersey, from Pennsylvania to Ohio and Indiana, many sprung up – all with a similar thirst for action that would be met as the bloody conflict escalated in the final years with General Lee's defeat at Gettysburg in the summer of 1863 and General Grant's attritional campaign in the Wilderness the following year.

The Confederacy was not short of its own attempts at creating shock troops in the Zouave style. Wheat's Tigers from Louisiana were raised in New Orleans, and the tough recruits serving in its ranks built a fearsome reputation not only for their prowess on the battlefield but also in whatever local bars they spent their leave. Alongside them were the 1st Battalion Louisiana Zouaves, known as Coppen's Wild Zouaves after their charismatic and fearless commander George Augustus Gaston de Coppens who led a highly cosmopolitan unit comprising of Swiss, German, Italian, French, Spanish and Irish volunteers. Both New Orleans formations would see plenty of action in the battles of the eastern theatre.

Zouaves on both sides of the divide lived up to the martial reputation they had inherited from their forebears in North Africa. Their extravagant dress sense may have given some the wrong impression, but in no way did it reflect their actual fighting ability. They played a significant role in the bitter conflict and forged a formidable reputation as shock troops who could be relied upon throughout the war, and in some cases they were sacrificed to hold valuable ground or called in at the last minute to save a critical situation. It seems fitting, therefore, to discover that the last Union soldier to die in the American Civil War was a Zouave belonging to the 155th Pennsylvania Regiment as he fought General Lee's crumbling Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox Court House in April 1865.

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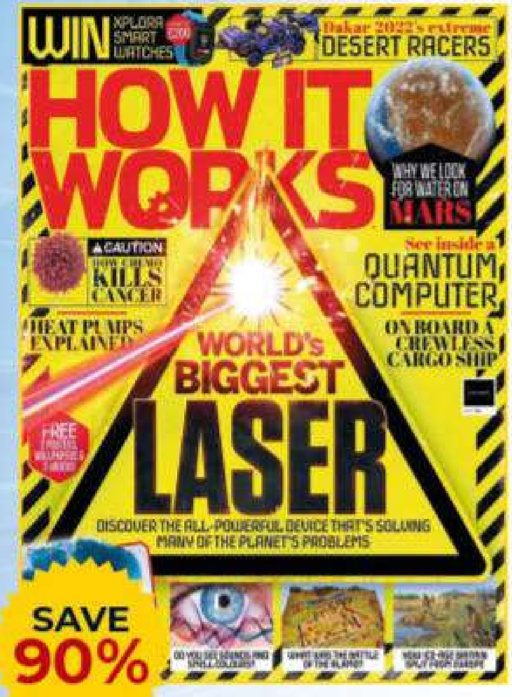

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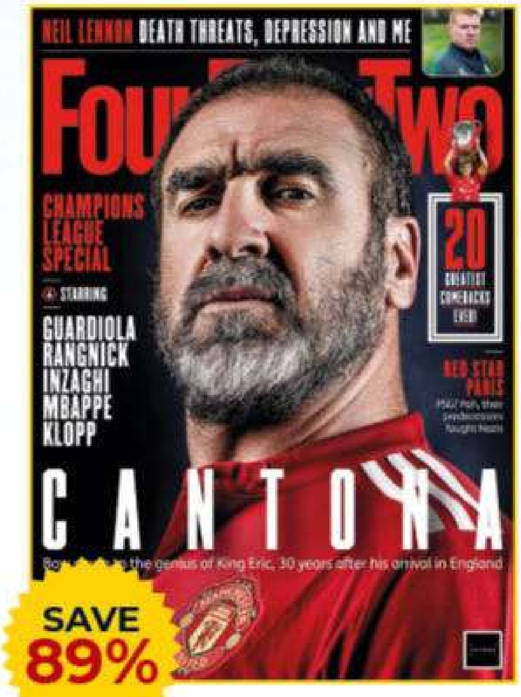

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# MUSEUMS & EVENTS

Discover Hadrian's Wall 1900 Festival, IWM Duxford's upcoming season of flying and a new exhibition on wartime intelligence

## Happy birthday, Hadrian's Wall

**English Heritage's 2022 Roman Season will host a series of events to mark 1,900 years since the Romans began building the iconic structure**

*English Heritage's programme offers plenty of fun for kids, notably a week of family events coinciding with the May half term*

***Main image:** Construction of Hadrian's Wall began in 122 CE, exactly 1,900 years ago, and has long since been one of the most recognisable structures of Roman Britain*

***Inset left:** Birdoswald Roman Fort events include an Easter trail quest, a summer living history camp, and both a falconry and artillery display in August*

***Inset right:** While Hadrian's Wall is perhaps best known for its fortresses, Corbridge was once a bustling town and supply base for Romans and civilians*

The 1,900th anniversary of Hadrian's Wall is to be recognised by English Heritage with a series of Roman Britain commemorative events and art installations. In Kent, southeast England, where the legions first landed in 43 CE, a major presentation at Richborough Roman Fort and Amphitheatre will see the unveiling of a reconstructed timber gateway and rampart alongside refurbishments to the museum. From Autumn 2022, visitors will be able to view several previously unseen artefacts, including a gold hair pin head and a weight in the form of the goddess Minerva. Additionally, after excavations to the amphitheatre in 2021, those exploring the site can discover new and insightful interpretations that shed light on what lies beneath their feet.

At Hadrian's Wall itself, which stretches 117km from coast to coast in what was once the Romans' northern frontier, English Heritage has commissioned artist and designer Morag Myerscough, working with community groups, to create contemporary artwork depicting a modern interpretation of a gatehouse at Housesteads Roman Fort. The installation is expected to open in time for the school summer holidays and will remain in place until October 2022.

Chester's Roman Fort will feature many of the military history highlights of 2022's programme. An action-packed weekend on July 23-24 will involve artillery, archery and cavalry re-enactment shows; from August 20-21, the Roman Empire's finest soldiers will compete in a clash of swords, shields and other period weaponry; and a spectacular night attack is to be thrown against the Roman defences on August 27-28. Meanwhile, at Birdoswald Roman Fort in Cumbria, over the same bank holiday weekend a Roman artillery competition of catapulta and ballista will showcase the military might of Britain's former occupiers. Numerous other exciting events, supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and National Lottery, are scheduled throughout the season.

Kate Mavor, English Heritage's chief executive, says: "English Heritage is proud to look after the single biggest collection of Roman sites in the country, from the spot where the Romans first landed to the wall marking the limits of their empire… Over three and a half centuries, the Romans shaped our society in different, complex ways and the surviving forts and amphitheatres, villas and bath-houses in the towns, cities and countryside in England are a potent, physical reminder of that influence. We hope that this year everyone has the chance to experience even a little of 'what the Romans did for us'."

**For more information visit: 1900.hadrianswallcountry.co.uk**

Images © English Heritage

# IWM Duxford's flying shows hit spectacular new heights

### From May to October, IWM Duxford's jam-packed programme of events promises to bring the historic airfield to life

IWM Duxford, recognised as Europe's largest air museum, will again host an exciting season of flying throughout the summer of 2022 and beyond. The programme kicks off on 7 May with a two-day celebration of VE Day, including spectacular flypasts and model aircraft demonstrations. D-Day will also be commemorated with more flying displays and ground entertainment on Sunday, 5 June. One of the year's highlights is expected to be the Duxford Summer Air Show across the weekend of 18-19 June, showcasing everything from historic warbirds in flight to all-action aerobatics and more.

On 23 July, to mark the 25th anniversary of IWM Duxford's American Air Museum, another fun-filled flying event is to be held. This will be followed by a school holiday special set for 1 August, enabling young aviation fans to learn more about their favourite aircraft. On 27 August, there will be a Duxford flying evening to see these aircraft in a different light, while the iconic Battle of Britain Air Show will run on 10-11 September. The flying programme ends on 8 October with a series of popular acts before a final event to recognise the 100th anniversary of the British Model Aircraft Association on 9 October.

IWM air show event manager, Phil Hood, says: "For 2022, we have been working hard behind the scenes to create even more events to pack into our six-month flying season… There will be more announcements, including display acts and showground content, but we can say for certain that it will be a flying season to remember."

**For more information: www.iwm.org.uk/airshows**

*Crowds watch one of IWM Duxford's renowned displays in front of Sally B, Europe's last airworthy B17 Flying Fortress*

Images © The Imperial War Museum

*The 'Big Wing' – 11 Spitfires and four Hurricanes fly in the formation adopted by RAF squadrons scrambling against Luftwaffe raids*

# Learn about the hidden world of spy tech

### A new exhibition at the National Science and Media Museum in Bradford will explore code-breaking, cyber security and secret communications

© Science Museum Group

*From World War I to the latest in cyber security, the exhibition spans much of the modern history of wartime intelligence*

First opened in Bradford, West Yorkshire, in 1983, the National Science and Media Museum has long charted the evolution of image and sound technologies while exploring their impact on everyday lives. It will now delve deep into how wartime informed some of these technologies following the unveiling of a new exhibition called Top Secret: From Ciphers to Cyber Security. After successful runs at London's Science Museum and Manchester's Science and Industry Museum, Bradford's institute is the latest to host around 100 objects related to the often highly classified underbelly of conflict.

The collection, which reveals numerous stories of communications intelligence from the last century, includes cypher machines used during the Second World War, secure telephones of the type provided to British prime ministers, and an encryption key given to the Queen. Other exhibits examine the more recent history of cyber security and the role of GCHQ in combating threats from what is increasingly becoming a digital front line.

Commenting about the opening on, curator of the National Science and Media Museum Toni Booth said: "We are incredibly excited to be welcoming Top Secret to Bradford. The exhibition will showcase how advancements in image and film have impacted domestic spyware throughout the Cold War era, and ultimately influenced modern technologies that have transformed how we communicate today."

Entry is free, although booking is essential. Top Secret: From Ciphers to Cyber Security will run until 5 June, 2022.

**For more information: scienceandmediamuseum.org.uk**

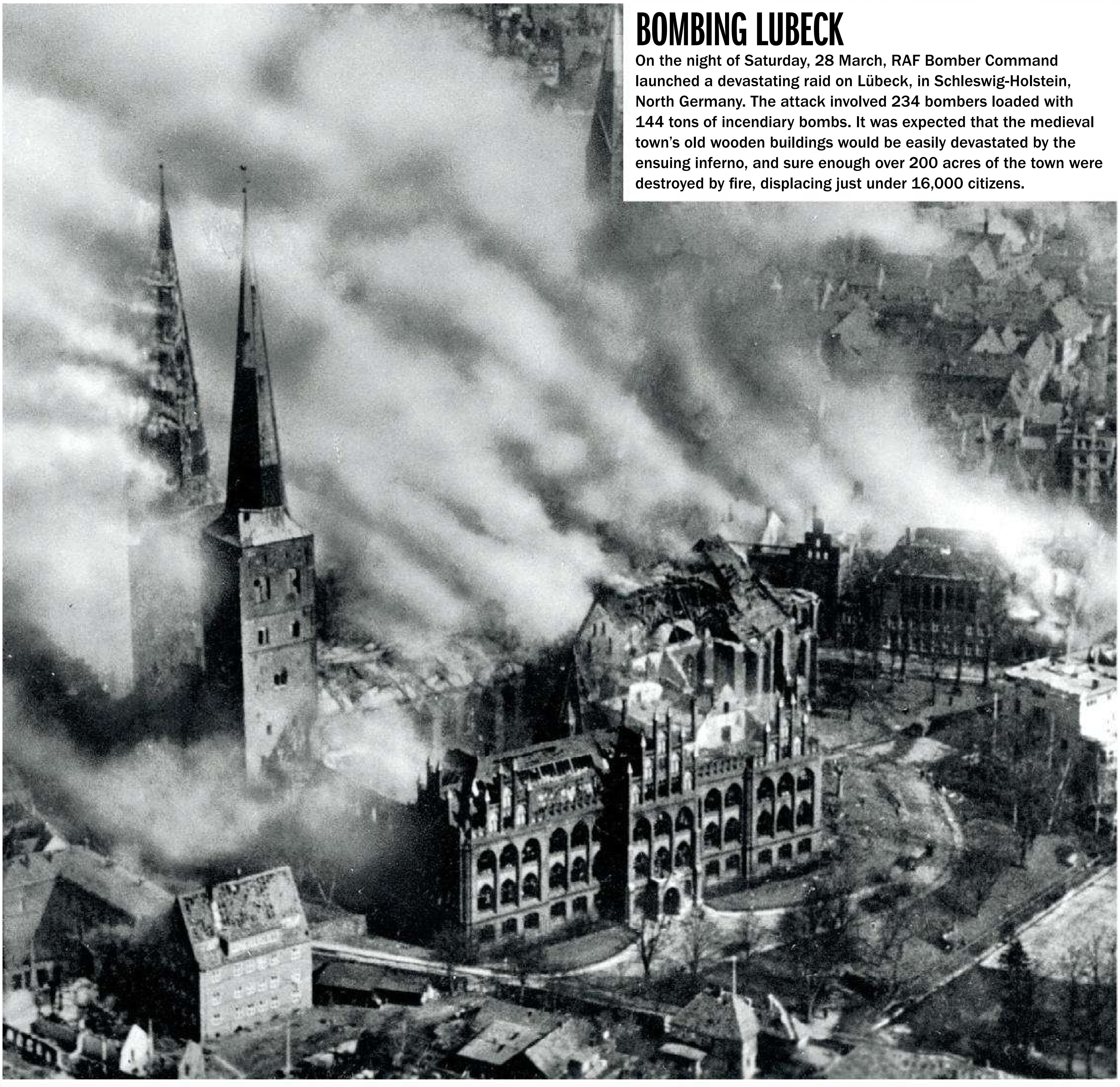
WWII THIS MONTH...

# MARCH 1942

To commemorate 80 years since the Second World War, **History of War** will be taking a look at some of the key events taking place during each month of the conflict

## BOMBING LUBECK

On the night of Saturday, 28 March, RAF Bomber Command launched a devastating raid on Lübeck, in Schleswig-Holstein, North Germany. The attack involved 234 bombers loaded with 144 tons of incendiary bombs. It was expected that the medieval town's old wooden buildings would be easily devastated by the ensuing inferno, and sure enough over 200 acres of the town were destroyed by fire, displacing just under 16,000 citizens.



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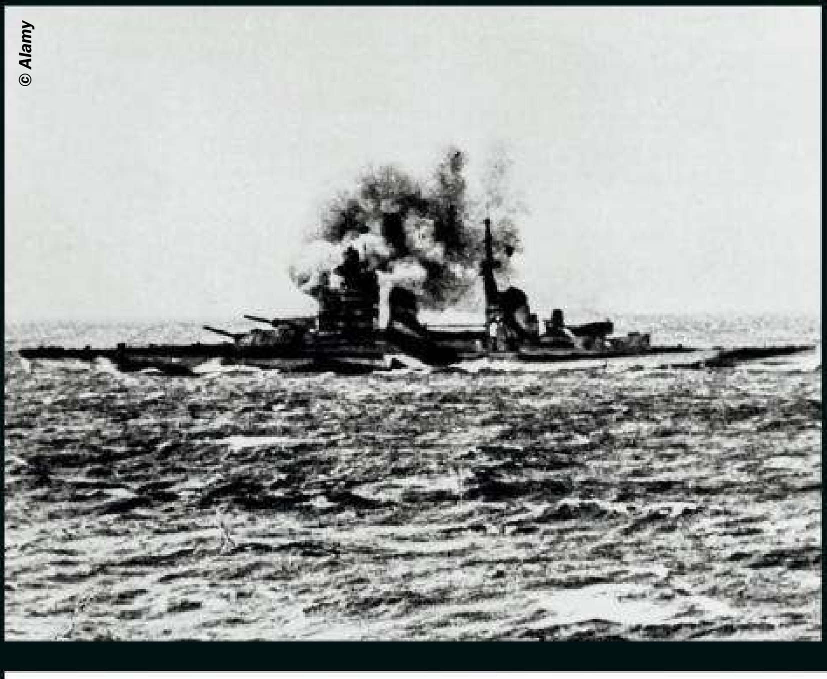
## CHARIOT OF FIRE

In the early hours of 28 March, 611 British sailors and Commandos launched Operation Chariot – described as the greatest and most audacious Allied raid of WWII. The target was the Nazi-occupied St Nazaire harbour, on the west coast of France near the city of Nantes. St Nazaire was home to the only dry dock in the region large enough to service the Tirpitz, Germany's last remaining Bismarck-class battleship. The attack was masterminded by Lord Mountbatten and involved ramming the WWI-era destroyer HMS Campbeltown into the dry dock, before detonating hidden timed explosives later that day. The mission was a success, though at the heavy cost of 169 killed.

## SECOND BATTLE OF THE SIRTE

On 22 March a British convoy of four cargo ships en route to Malta was intercepted by the Italian Regia Marina, including the battleship Littorio. Though the Royal Navy escort did manage to fend off the attack, only one of the cargo vessels was able to reach the habour of Valletta.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## DUTCH DOWNFALL

On 8 March, the governor-general of the Dutch East Indies surrendered to the Japanese, handing over control of Java.

## SPITFIRES FOR MALTA

The aerial bombardment of Malta, a key strategic position in the Mediterranean and home to some 250,000 people, escalated in the spring of 1942 as the Luftwaffe continued to add its weight to the repeated Italian bombing. Initially the fighter squadrons defending Malta were only equipped with outdated machines such as famous Gloster Gladiator biplanes nicknamed Faith, Hope and Charity. On 7 March the first delivery of Spitfires arrived on the island, bolstering the air defences.

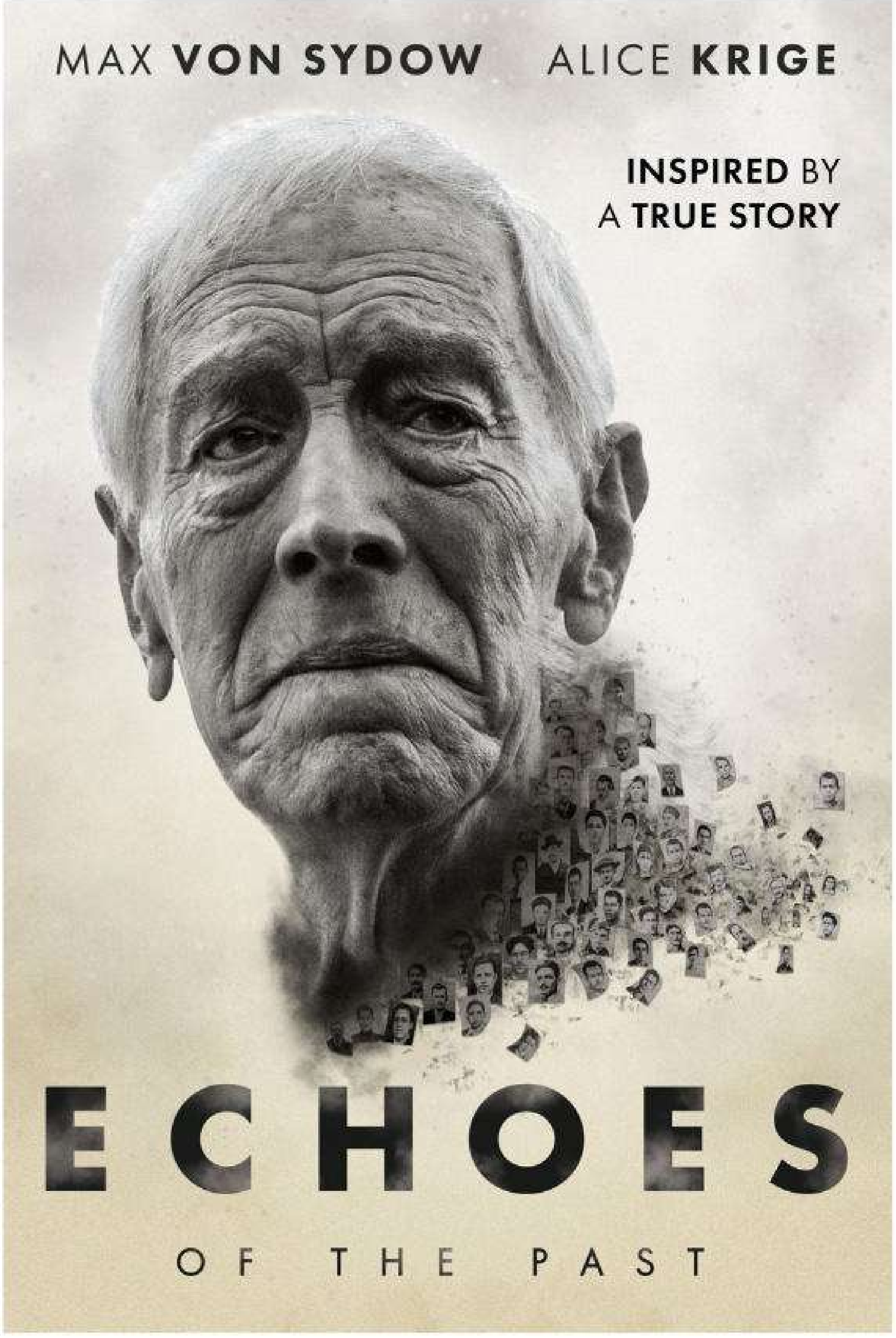
# REVIEWS

Our pick of the latest military history books and films

# ECHOES OF THE PAST

## THIS DISTURBING AND THOUGHT-PROVOKING STUDY OF MEMORY AND LOSS SHINES A LIGHT ON A DARK CHAPTER IN GREEK HISTORY

**Director:** Nicholas Dimitropoulos **Cast:** Max von Sydow, Alice Krige **Released:** Out now


MAX VON SYDOW ALICE KRIGE
INSPIRED BY A TRUE STORY
ECHOES
OF THE PAST

*Echoes of the Past* presents a fictionalised wartime tale inspired by real events in Kalavryta, Greece, in December 1943, when in response to the execution of almost 80 German prisoners by Greek guerrillas, German troops murdered 700 villagers. After the war the Greek government demanded compensation, and the film follows a lawyer Caroline Martin (Astrid Roos) who's sent from the Federal Republic of Germany to investigate the massacre and assess the merits of German war reparations. She tracks down Nikolas Andreou (Max von Sydow), an elderly, frail man who witnessed the killings as a young boy.

At times the pace is rather glacial and unfolding the story through continual flashbacks feels all too conventional. Furthermore, the slightly uneasy mix of fact and fiction has drawn some criticism in Greece. There is controversy over whether an Austrian soldier actually helped some of the victims escape a burning school. His portrayal in the film sparked ill-feeling between the producers and the relatives of those killed, who believe he is simply a propaganda myth. The soldier's actions, though, act to show that not all German troops were murderous thugs or unfeeling automatons blindly following orders. Ultimately it is important to remember that this tale is a dramatisation, inspired by, rather than based on, true events.

There is much to recommend in this film. The pace, of course, is deliberate as it allows the tension to build unbearably. The sense of time and place in the flashbacks is very effectively evoked, as is the sense of helplessness and fear when the occupiers first arrive to replace the Italian garrison. Courteous German officers billet themselves in Nikolas' family home, much to the alarm of his parents, for reasons that soon become obvious. Likewise, the massacre of the men from the village on a nearby hillside and the attempted murder of the women and children in the local school is shown in harrowing detail. In some ways this is reminiscent of director Elem Klimov's shocking *Come and See* (1985), which follows a group of brutalised Soviet partisans during the Second World War. *Echoes of the Past* also shows the terrible dilemma posed by those who want to resist occupation and the inevitable brutal repercussions for family and friends.

Max von Sydow, in his final role, delivers a haunting and melancholy performance. It is his eyes rather than his dialogue that convey Nikolas' unending pain. His life has been blighted by the trauma and survivor's guilt, and relating his experiences to Caroline Martin does nothing but add to his sense of overwhelming despair. Sadly, von Sydow died before the film was completed but it remains a fitting tribute to his skills as an actor. Overall this is a thought-provoking meditation on memory and terrible loss during wartime. **ATJ**

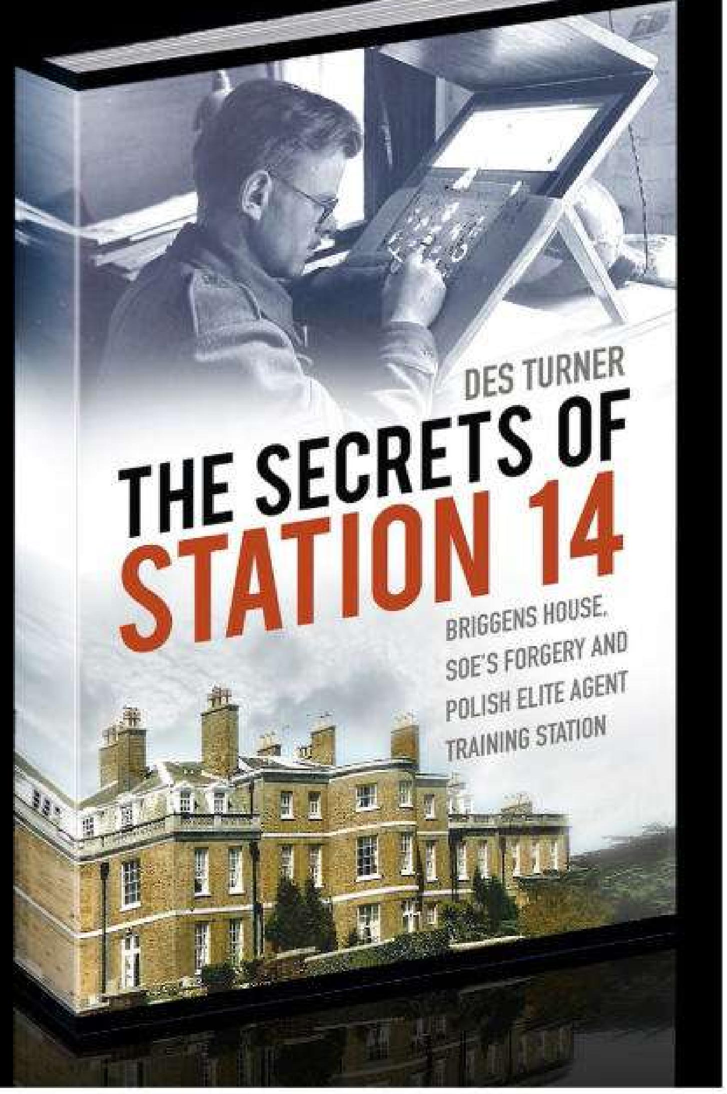
*In his last role, Max von Sydow plays a traumatised survivor who witnessed Nazi atrocities as a young boy*

*The film portrays the brutal reprisals against Greek civilians by German troops*

# THE SECRETS OF STATION 14

### A REVEALING INSIGHT INTO THE BACKROOM BOYS OF ESPIONAGE

**Author:** Des Turner **Publisher:** The History Press **Price:** £18.99



This book tells the unknown story of Briggens House and its contribution to the Allied war effort during the Second World War. The house and grounds played host to the Special Operation Executive's (SOE) vital false documentation section and a paramilitary finishing school for Polish saboteurs known as the Cichociemni (silent and unseen). It was one of 70 such establishments run by the SOE in its efforts to "set Europe ablaze" on the instructions of Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

Turner tackles this much less glamorous but nonetheless vital aspect of the spying game. His well-researched study, drawing on official government records, memoirs and first-hand accounts, follows on from his previous work on SOE activities at Aston House. He was inspired to write it after a chance encounter with the first commanding officer of Briggens House.

Forging identity and travel documents was as much a science as an art, requiring card, paper and ink made from specific materials to look genuine. Samples of such convincing work are illustrated in colour. Eighty-one Poles lost their lives while on special operations, and the author does not shy away from describing the political tensions between the Polish underground and their British hosts over the allocation of resources and the future of Poland.

The first edition was self-published in 2017 and limited to just 200 copies, so it's pleasing it can now reach a much wider audience. For those interested in the nuts and bolts of espionage this book comes highly recommended. **ATJ**

> **"FORGING IDENTITY AND TRAVEL DOCUMENTS WAS AS MUCH A SCIENCE AS AN ART, REQUIRING CARD, PAPER AND INK MADE FROM SPECIFIC MATERIALS TO LOOK GENUINE"**

# FUGITIVES

### THE STORY OF NAZIS WHO FOUND NEW CAREERS AFTER THE WAR AS FREELANCE ARMS TRAFFICKERS, SPIES AND ASSASSINS IN THE SERVICE OF WESTERN POWERS

**Author:** Danny Orbach **Publisher:** Hurst & Co **Price:** £18.99 (hardback) **On sale:** March 2022

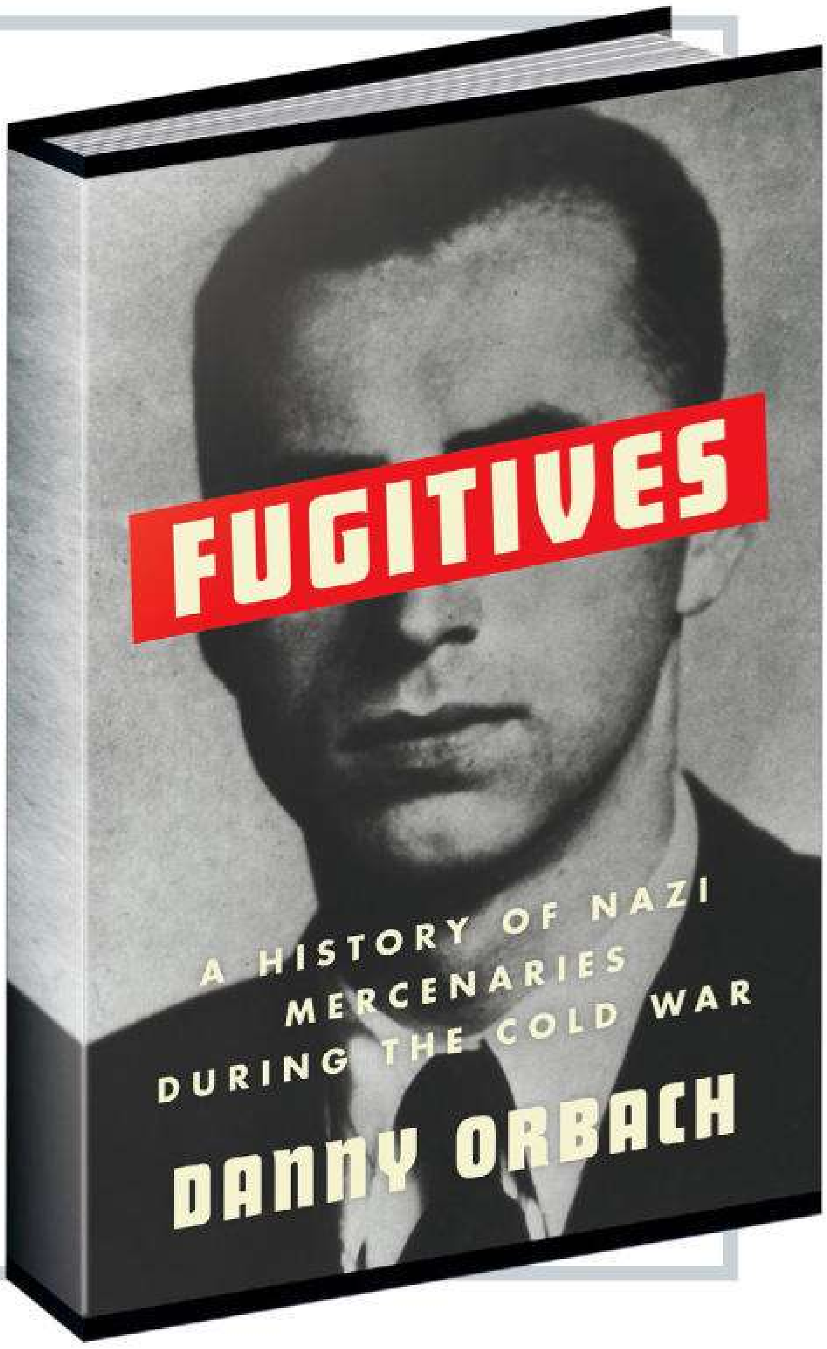
With Adolf Hitler dead and his regime vanquished in 1945, the problem now facing thousands of former Nazi operatives was to find a way of supporting themselves and their families. For some, the answer was to offer their services to Western intelligence agencies, including that of the newly founded Federal Republic of Germany.

Enter Reinhard Gehlen, former chief of the Wehrmacht Foreign Armies East military intelligence bureau and spymaster who in 1956 founded the Federal Intelligence Service of West Germany (BND). Gehlen had already established his bona fides with the Western powers shortly after the war as head of the anti-communist Gehlen Organisation, which maintained close affiliations to the CIA.

Author Danny Orbach delves into this murky episode of the Cold War and brings to light a rogues' gallery of sinister characters and their operations. So blinded were the Western governments, including Israel, by the communist threat that moral principles were cast to the wind by working hand-in-hand with an array of Nazi fugitives.

The joy did not last long. The BND policy of employing former Nazis eventually came under attack by Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, political leaders of all major parties and the media. It was seen as a security risk as well as a moral blemish on West Germany. After all, to whom did these agents really owe their allegiance?

Orbach makes the point that in the end, these fugitives and mercenaries were not important in and of themselves. "Their historical significance," he says, "derived from the illusions which states, governments and secret services harboured about them." **JS**



# SOLFERINO 21

## AN EXAMINATION OF THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO THE BATTLE OF SOLFERINO, WHICH LED TO THE CREATION OF THE RED CROSS

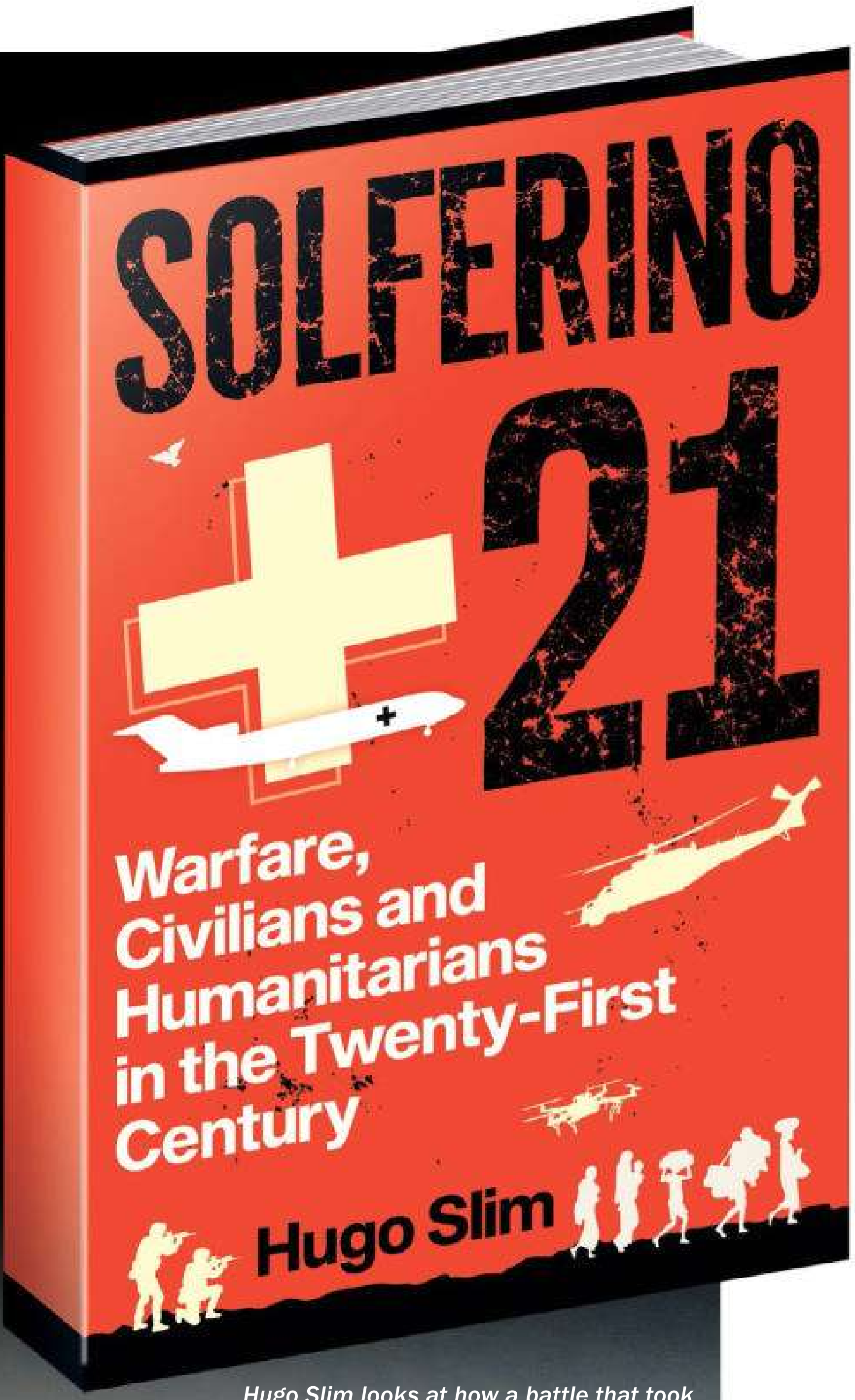
Author: **Hugo Slim** Publisher: **Hurst & Co** Price: **£16.99**
Released: **Out now**

The Battle of Solferino (1859) was more than just a defeat for the Austrians at the hands of the French and Sardinians. Napoleon III was so shocked by the huge number of casualties, estimated at 30,000 dead and wounded, that he met Emperor Franz Joseph I of Austria to arrange a preliminary peace. Swiss humanitarian and social activist Jean-Henri Dunant, who toured the bloody battlefield after the conflict, was moved to write a short book which served to inspire the foundation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in 1863.

Hugo Slim uses Solferino as the starting point for his well-researched narrative about war and humanitarian aid in contemporary times and how we should prepare for what the future holds. Solferino gave way to an era of military power with access to trains, telephones and automated weapons; the author makes the point that this is comparable with today's technological revolution and a new arms race moving from industrial to computerised conflict.

The scale, stakes and technology of armed conflict are set to change significantly over the next decade as computerised war gathers pace and if 'great power competition' escalates into direct military engagements. The three trends cited are the possibility of a big war spreading across new domains; intense computerised combat; and fighting in the context of climate change, urbanisation and increasing levels of infectious disease.

Slim insists that global humanitarian aid must evolve quickly to meet the challenge of warfare and great power rivalry during the current climate emergency. This will require an emphasis on greater humanitarian cooperation at national and global levels to help millions of people survive any future conflict. **JS**


SOLFERINO
21
Warfare, Civilians and Humanitarians in the Twenty-First Century
Hugo Slim

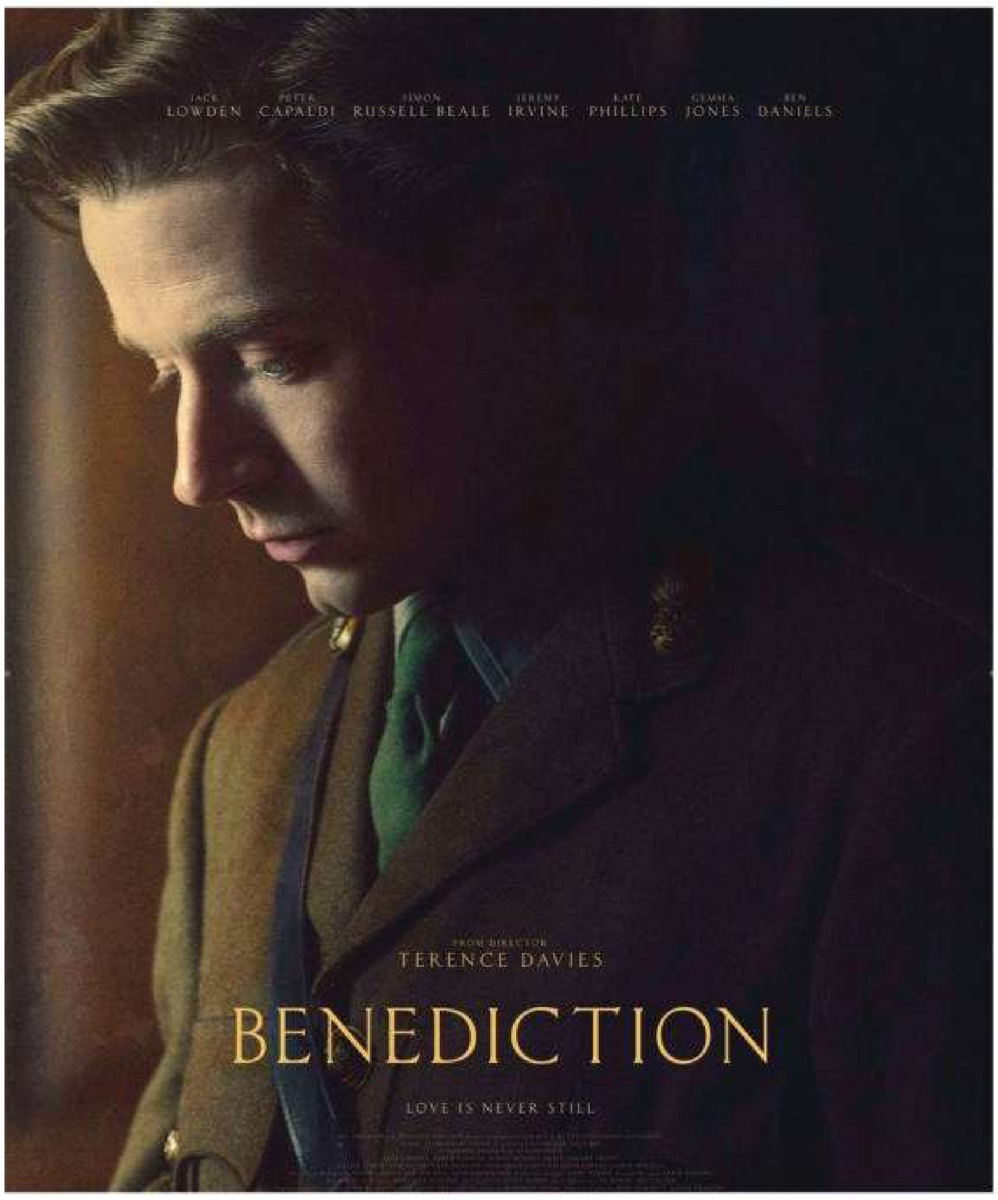
Hugo Slim looks at how a battle that took place over 160 years ago still impacts our approach to war and humanitarian aid

© Getty

# BENEDICTION

## A SOMBRE AND HEART-WRENCHING BIOPIC ABOUT THE TRAUMATISED WORLD WAR I POET SIEGFRIED SASSOON

**Director:** Terence Davies **Cast:** Jack Lowden, Peter Capaldi, Jeremy Irvine **Released:** 20 May 2022



PTSD is looked upon with compassion and empathy in the 21st century because we know more about the dreadful psychological impact of war. In 1917, not so much. When Siegfried Sassoon, an officer in the British Army awarded the Military Cross for bravery, penned a pacifist statement titled *Finished with the War: A Soldier's Declaration*, subsequently read out in Parliament, it was a potentially life-threatening moral stand. As a member of the upper set, Sassoon wasn't shot at dawn for treason, instead strings were pulled and he was sent to Edinburgh's Craiglockhart War Hospital to convalesce.

The horror and tragedy of the Great War 1914-18 has been covered many times by film and television, but here Terence Davies' new production delves specifically into Sassoon's biography, documenting the string of love affairs with men, including singer and actor Ivor Novello (Jeremy Irvine), and his immense struggles with survivor's guilt. He lived in an era when homosexuality was a criminal offence and talking about one's feelings wasn't the done thing. In later years Sassoon, in turmoil, attempted to find salvation in Catholicism, making the film's title *Benediction*, in church lingo meaning a 'blessing', all the more poignant.

The role of Sassoon is split between Jack Lowden (the war period and the 1930s) and ex-Doctor Who Peter Capaldi (1950s scenes). The younger actor especially is on brilliant form, detailing a vulnerable and nervous man trying to find his way in post-war Britain and meeting nothing but dissatisfaction at every turn. In old age, Capaldi's saturnine take on Sassoon sees the poet transformed into a bitter and disagreeable type: uncommunicative, depressed, prone to sitting in the dark in his armchair, ghosts of the past tormenting him without mercy or respite.

The film is sepulchral, though always artful and imaginative, incorporating dreamlike sequences involving shifting backgrounds and faces aging suddenly, rather than using traditional cutting methods or transitions such as fade-to-black. What this does is create a delicately modernist and sometimes surreal flow, one inherently – arguably uniquely – cinematic. The use of photomontage too, featuring gruesome stills snapped on the front, the camera panning across an image and downwards, appear to be directly inspired by the bleak title sequence to the landmark 1964 BBC documentary *The Great War*, narrated by Michael Redgrave.

What unfolds across two hours and 17 minutes won't be for everybody. This is an unforgiving and thematically heavy drama about mental and spiritual suffering, depicting a man who believed he was both an artistic failure and somebody incapable of finding love and contentment.

*Benediction* wows due to the totality of its effect. If the air of melancholy becomes almost suffocating at times, Davies, a master director, never allows it to become overwrought or be distracted by melodramatic grandstanding. This is a truly stunning work, a punishing but equally rewarding examination of stiff upper lip British emotional repression; Sassoon a troubled soul first destroyed by war and then love. Even its humour – the dialogue is chock-full of catty bon mots – is caustic and mean-spirited. **MC**

*Jeremy Irvine (left) plays Ivor Novello and Jack Lowden is the young Siegfried Sassoon*

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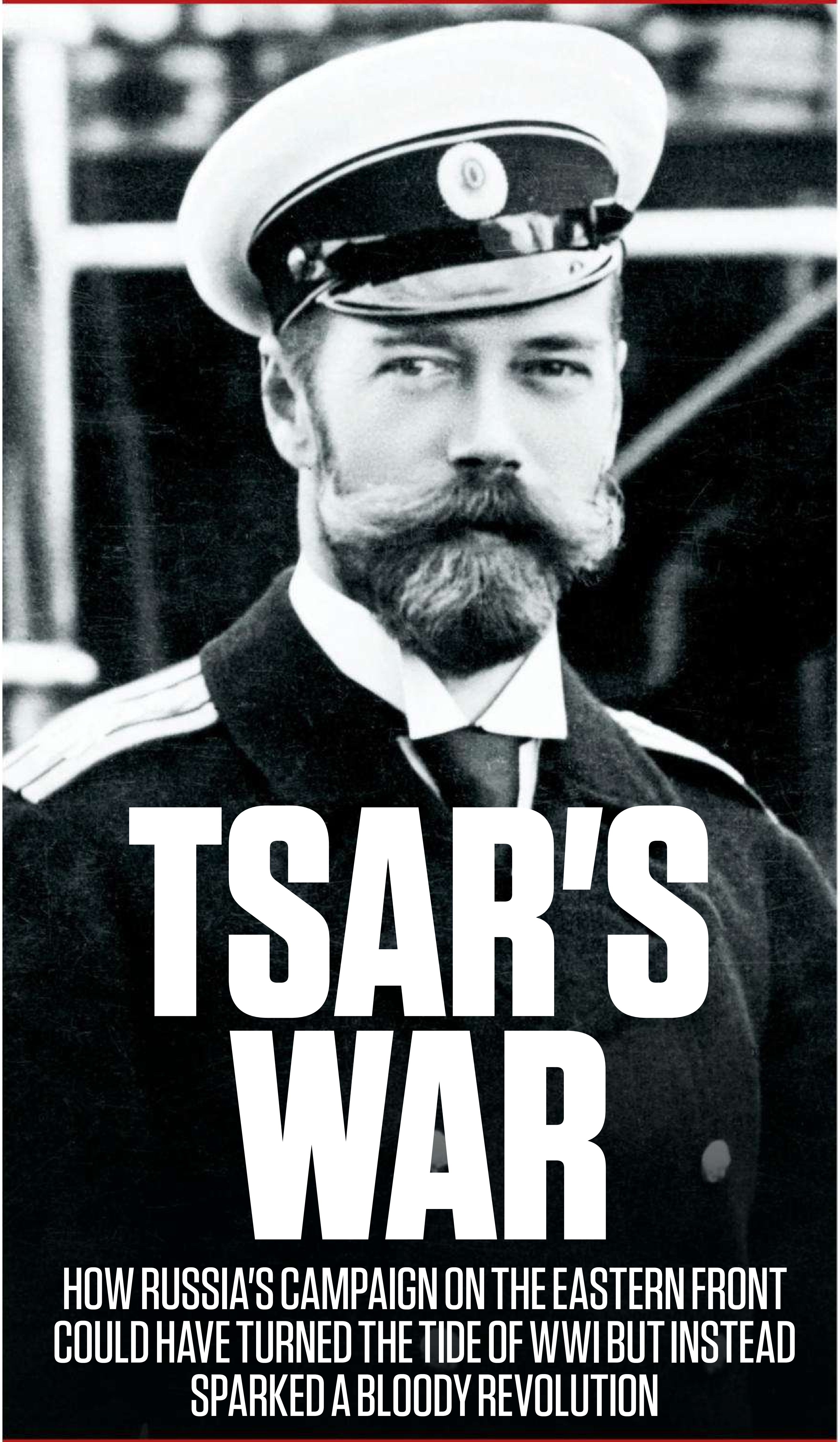

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# TSAR'S WAR

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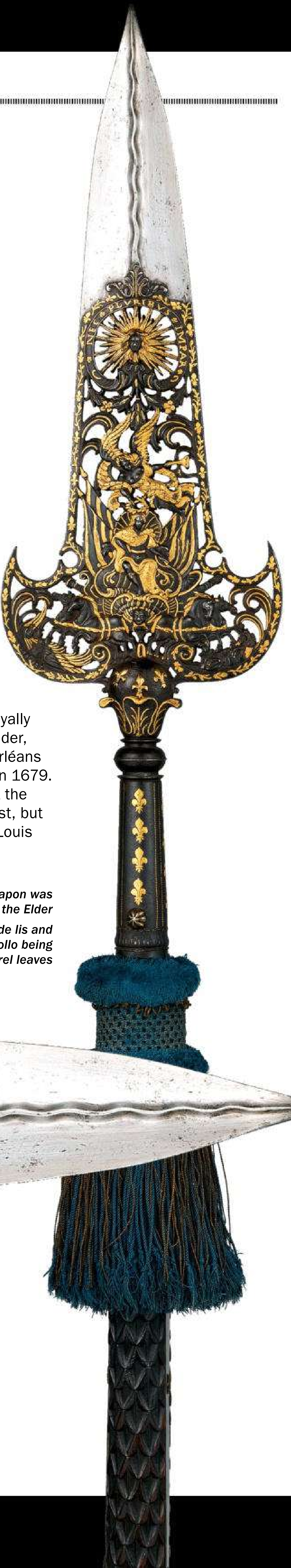
# LOUIS XIV PARTISAN

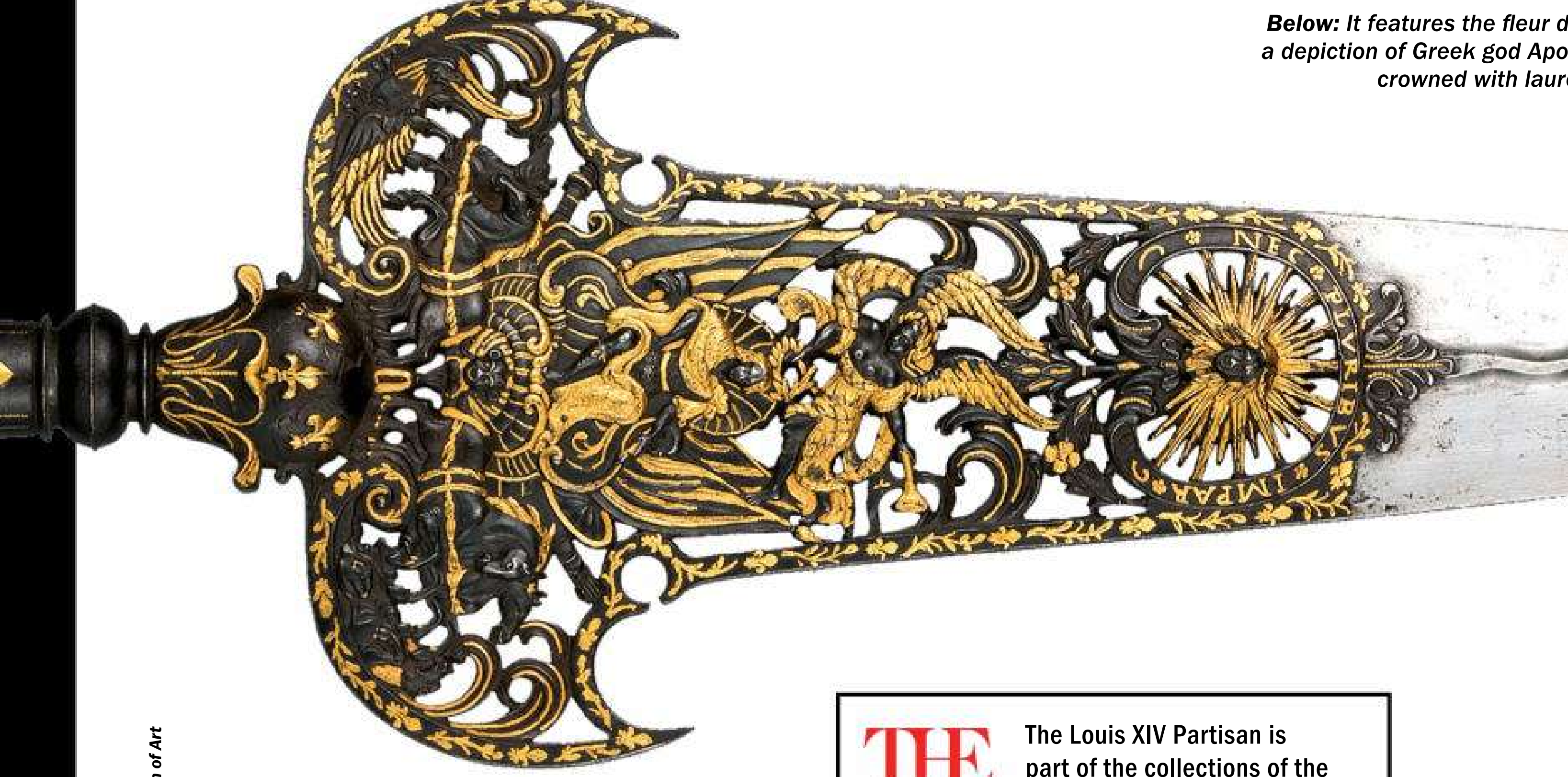
## This decorative polearm was designed more to inspire awe than inflict harm

Louis XIV, king of France between 1643 and 1715, is perhaps best known for the splendour and pageantry with which he presented both himself and his court. This passion for pomp did not stop at his servants, and certainly not for his royal guard. This polearm, known as a partisan, belonged to a member of the king's Gardes de la Manche (Guards of the Sleeve), who were the bodyguards of the French monarch.

Elegantly designed with the fleur de lis, this decorative piece also features the Greek god Apollo being crowned with laurel leaves. The king's royal motto "Nec Pluribus Impar" (not equaled by many) is also etched above his own Sun King emblem – a symbol often used in royal regalia as part of Louis' obsession with projecting his god-like status. This partisan was designed by one of the king's royally appointed artists, Jean Bérain the Elder, for the marriage of Marie-Louise d'Orléans (Louis' niece) to Charles II of Spain in 1679. The wedding ceremony took place at the Palace of Fontainebleau on 30 August, but the couple did not meet until Marie-Louis travelled to Spain two months later.



***Right:** The highly decorative weapon was designed by artist Jean Bérain the Elder*



***Below:** It features the fleur de lis and a depiction of Greek god Apollo being crowned with laurel leaves*

THE MET

The Louis XIV Partisan is part of the collections of the Department of Arms and Armor at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. For more information visit:

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*Images: Metropolitan Museum of Art*

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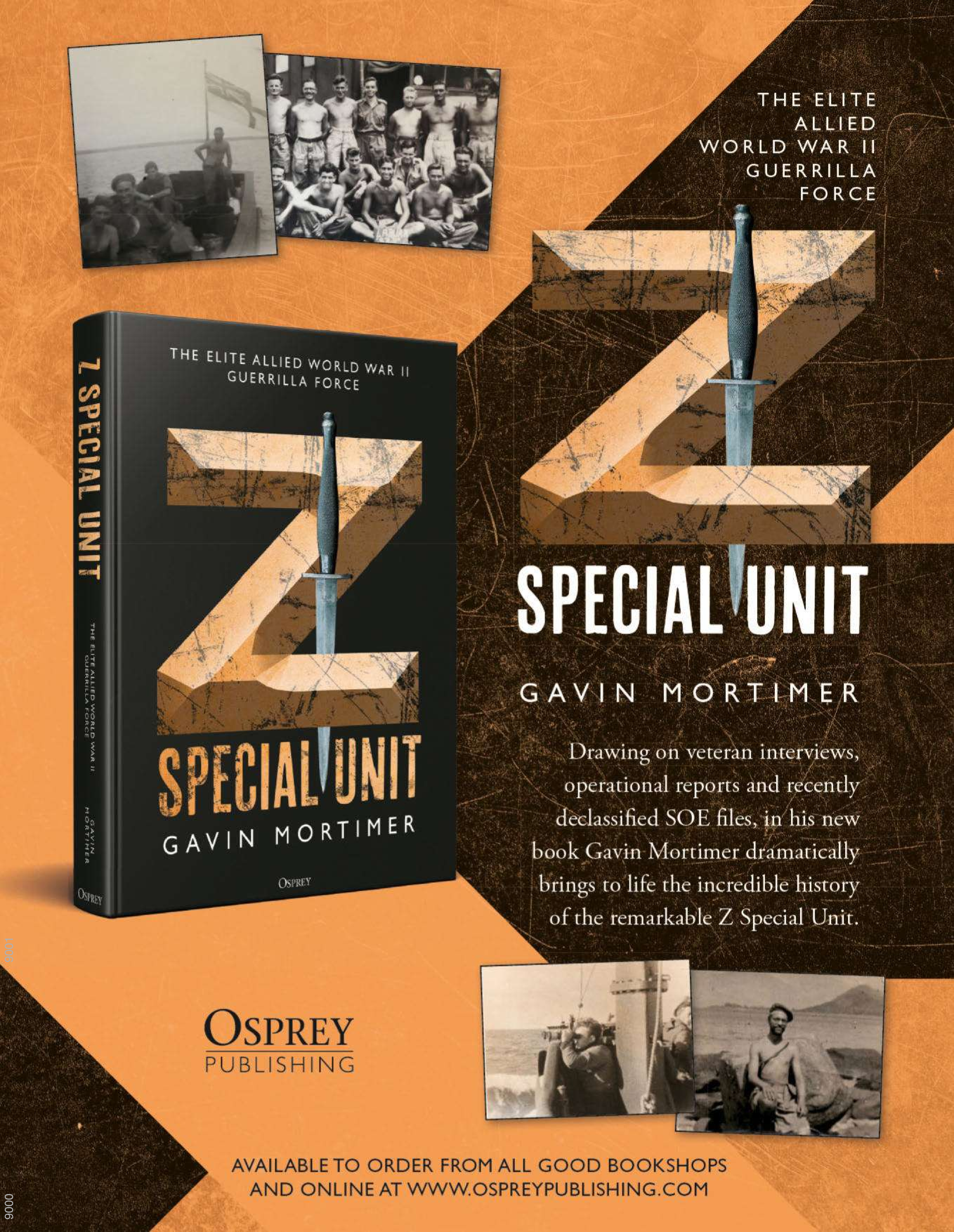
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